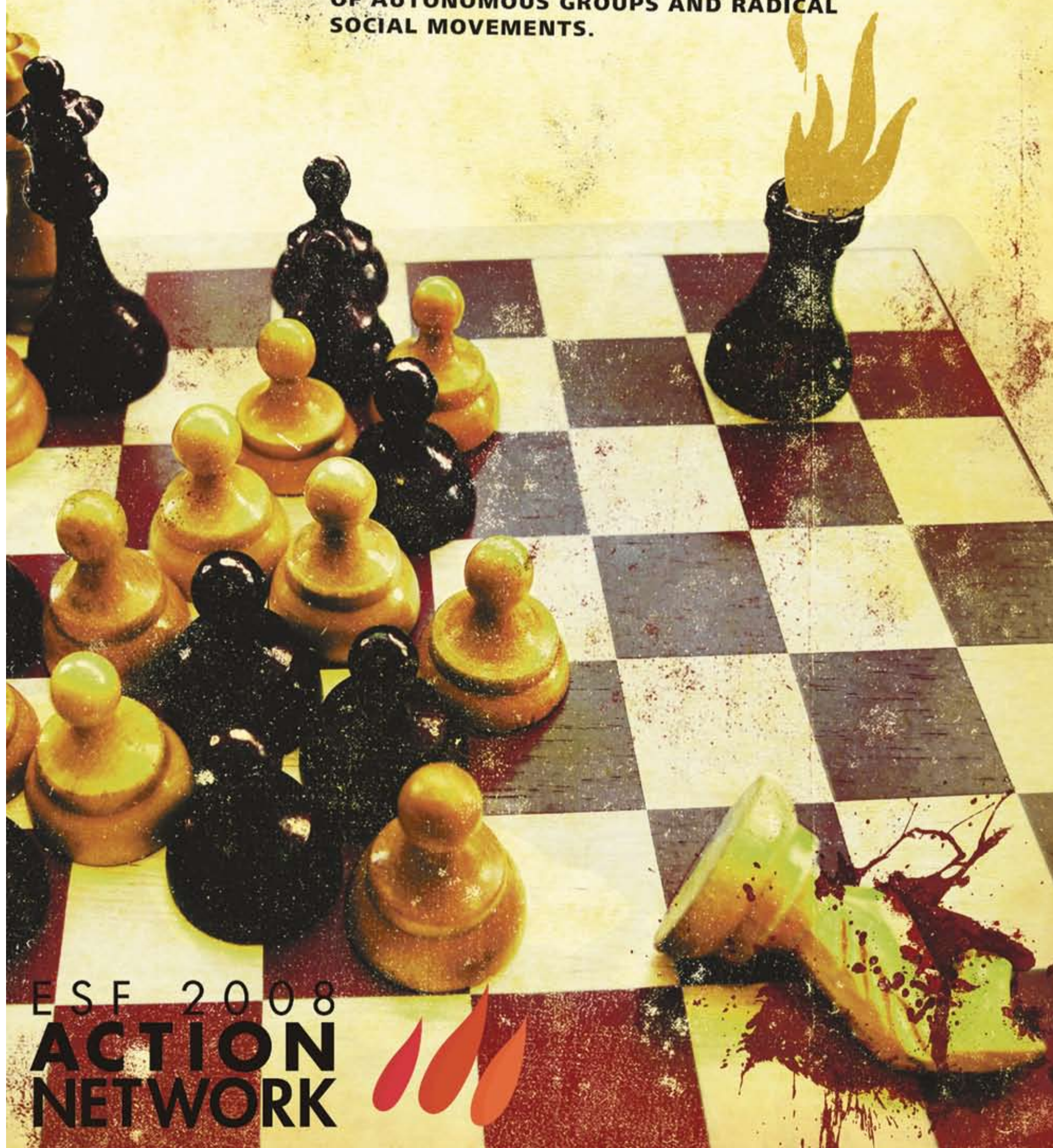


FROM THOUGHTS TO ACTION

ACTION NETWORK IS A NETWORK
OF AUTONOMOUS GROUPS AND RADICAL
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.



ESF 2008
**ACTION
NETWORK**



Editorial

We are proud to present **From Thoughts To Action** – a tabloid paper compiling articles of relevance both to the European Social Forum in Malmö but also independently of any certain time and place. We have tried to cover as much as possible of the whole span of struggles taking place in today's Europe, each different and separated from the next, yet connected. The texts address questions that are raised at seminars, workshops and actions during the ESF as well as in future mobilizations and struggles.

This paper was made by a broad and diverse range of different autonomous media-collectives, all part of the ESF Action Network (ESFAN). A network enabling us to organize meetings and actions in our own way, without having to answer to or rely on the official Forum. ESFAN was not created in opposition, even though we recognize that the organizational structure, the heavy bureaucracy and the high costs involved in the Forum makes it difficult for smaller or less formalized groups to work within the ESF. Our activities run parallel to the official Forum, some are being listed in the ESF program, and we take part in the united demonstration at the end of the Forum. Yet, we are critical to the fact that the ESF platform shuts out any group that is or has been employing armed struggle as a means. The Zapatistas, as an example, initiated intercontinental meetings against global neo-liberalism long before the Forum process had even begun. In return, they are now being shut out from participating in the same kind of gatherings.

“What unites us is the will to strive for change, and the determination to take action in order to achieve it.”

It's not only during the ESF that we make politics”, and we do not limit our politics to defending our social centers, blocking G8 summits or confronting neo-Nazi marches. It has nothing to do with trivial or mere symbolic acts. Our every day struggles take place before, under and after the ESF. Still, we value the opportunity to gather, discuss and network that the ESF presents - just as any other large mobilization to a common end does. What matters to us are the meetings taking place in the outskirts of the Forum, between people and groups from different regions and contexts, and the activity these meetings generate. Instead of relying on our own experiences, we have access to others' as well. An increased exchange of ideas and experiences can strengthen local struggles and revitalize an anti-capitalist movement that cooperates beyond regions, undermines borders and - now and again - achieves victories.

The ESF Action Network is not only active during the ESF, the ambition is to continue on after these September days. It is a terrifying and exciting time we are living in, and the future offers plenty of challenges and opportunities. Next fall, Sweden is once again the host country of the European Union, thereby offering the opportunity to take back the initiative lost during the EU summit in Gothenburg in 2001. In May, NATO celebrates its 60th birthday in Strasbourg and Kehl. And, by December, the climate summit in Copenhagen takes place to follow up on the Kyoto protocol. For an anti-capitalist environmental movement this is the opportune time to intervene in the general debate on

how “green capitalism” and a little nuclear power could halt the approaching climate catastrophe.

All of ESFAN's actions during the ESF are publicly announced and open for everyone to take part in. What we choose to do, we do openly and without excuses, whether it's arranging seminars or a street party or blocking the Migration Board out of self defense. The police, on the contrary, have a hidden agenda. During these five days in September, up to the same amount of cops will be placed in Malmö as there was during the EU summit in Gothenburg 2001. Quite amazing if you think about it; to the police the ESF just seem to be a grand rehearsal for the coming EU presidency and future larger mobilizations.

We see the police presence at the Forum in Malmö as yet another example of the increasingly harsher climate in EU politics. Theory is put into practice and European police forces now (legitimately) cooperate closely, exchan-

ging strategies and information. Frontex, responsible for the "external border management" of the EU, is setting up armed guard forces to stop migrants from entering Fortress Europe. And this well beyond the borders of the EU and outside the laws of its member states, consequently adding to the insecure conditions of paperless migrants. While the borders around the European Union are tightened, the numbers of precarious workers are growing on the domestic labour markets. This, in turn, changes the layout of the working classes and increases the need to reorganize the trade unions as well as to develop strategies to counter this forced flexibility. Indeed, more and more undocumented migrants, women, youth and other precarious workers self-organize to fight together against their miserable living conditions.

The following articles discuss these topics, thus reflecting the discussions among those concerned, activists and academics from many settings and movements in Europe. What unites us is the will to strive for change, and the determination to take action in order to achieve it. No one is going to do it for us, but together we can put our thoughts into action! **“**

paperless = sans-papiers, migrants lacking legal documents
precarious = having uncertain, risky, temporary jobs and lives, lacking social security



BRAND Brand is an anarchist magazine existing from 1898 up to today. The editorial collective helps to write, collect and publicise texts from activists who participate in social struggles worldwide, to show a different side than that which so often is presented to us. We work in solidarity with struggles that arise from below by the people affected, whatever means used. Our liberation must be by our own hands.
www.anarkistisktidning.org



DIREKT AKTION Direkt Aktion (translates to Direct Action) is a 10-year old Swedish revolutionary socialist youth magazine. In it you can read about student struggles, antifascism, music, feminism and many other important, interesting subjects. Direkt Aktion contains both longer theoretical articles, interviews, chronicles, reviews, comics and wallpapers. Direkt Aktion is published by the Syndicalist Youth Federation (SUF) and is aimed towards all young people interested in or involved in the workers' movement and/or other revolutionary movements.
www.suf.cc



Embryo Embryo is a small collective with great ambitions: to be an anarchist think tank or that annoying kid in class pointing out that things aren't always what they seem. Society, people and power are far more complex than that. We publish reflections, discussions and news in our paper zine and on our webpage anarkisterna.com. So far, texts are mainly written in Swedish, now there is an English blog running, too.
www.anarkisterna.com



motkraft Motkraft.net is an independent newsportal for the extraparlimentary left in Sweden. Motkraft tries to break down the divide between action and information, and to be an organizative part of radical campaigns. In rightwing media the site has been described as "the weatherforecasters of riots", because of ongoing liveupdates ("swarm communication") from political manifestations.
www.motkraft.net



Yelah Yelah.net is a free leftjournal existing on the internet since 1994. We want to be an alternative to the commercial media and broaden the discussion about the global resistance against state, capital and oppressing structures and give a libertarian socialist perspective on society and "reality". The revolution will not be televised- but Yelah will write about it.
www.yelah.net

Schedule

See www.esf2008action.net for more information and changes.
(of course all activites are free of charge if nothing else is stated)

All week

9.00-21.00 (Gallery Panora) Piracy is liberation
An exhibition on police violence. Mattias Elftorp presents a story called Violence, which is part of his series of cyberpunk/postapocalypse graphic novels called Piracy is Liberation. The exhibition is dedicated to Malmö 26, the 26 who were indicted for being on the picket line against a sushi restaurant at Lilla Torg in Malmö.

Wednesday

18.00 ESF Welcome ceremony
in Folkets Park.

20.30 The struggle continues:

Autonomous spaces yesterday, today and in the future. Cinema Panora

AUTONOMIFILMFESTIVALEN enters again.

This time we bring attention to the struggle over autonomous spaces around Europe and Scandinavia, with the example of Ungdomshuset in Copenhagen. We screen shorter films from the 1980s to the present, from the struggle of the BZ-movement up to today's fighters for a new youth house. After the screenings we have a seminar with open discussion. See European Culture Program for more information; www.panora.nu

Thursday

Action Day: Migration.

Day of action for freedom of movement and the right to stay!

Migration is a social movement in which migration movements and struggles confront and challenge the reality of domination and exploitation. Europe is being transformed into a closed fortress and is adopting extreme measures to prevent access to its territory and to expel the undocumented. Every day people are being detained and deported. Every day people are being denied education, health care, the right to work and thrown into destitution because of their immigration status. Every day people are paid peanuts and made to work in life threatening conditions by unscrupulous employers because of their immigration status. Every day people die trying to cross borders. Every day Immigration Officers raid people's homes at dawn and raid migrants at work.

Picknick and blockade!

From early morning, outside the Migration Office (Migrationverket)

Demonstration, Stortorget, Malmö 11.00

Festivities in the proximity of area close to Migration Office, 13.00

14.00-16.00 (Utkanten, Industrigatan 20) Radical Women Assembly

A paneldiscussion and workshop on womens double work (in public sector, as parttime worker, housework/housewife, women salaries etc)

16.00-18.00 (Utkanten, Industrigatan 20) Radical Assembly on precarity and workplace struggles
Struggle against precarity, from campaigns to selforganizing. Open Assembly and workshop. Share your experiences on combating the daily exploitation on your workplace. Talk with and meet others in a precarious work situation from

different countries and exchange ideas, smart tactics or conspire how to overthrow capitalism.

Friday

Action Day: Anti-militarism.

For more information see: europeanpeaceaction.org/programme-european-peace-action-forum

14.00-16.00 (Utkanten, Industrigatan 20) Radical Assembly on squatting and social centers

Social movements needs social forums, social forums needs social centres. Open Assembly and practical workshop for sharing experiences from the recent wave of struggles for social centres and squatting i Europe. A new wave of struggles for free zones and social centres broke out after the eviction of Ungdomshuset in 2007. What are the possibilities in Europe today to open new self managed spaces for social movements? What role can these spaces play in the local community and local struggles to promote radical antagonism? How can we counteract the states repressive measures against the centres and squats?

16.00-18.00 (Utkanten, Industrigatan 20) Radical Assembly on future mobilisations

Europe as a shared space of conflicts. Open Assembly for radical and antagonistic movements. A forum for presenting coming events, future mobilisations and to give reports from recent network meetings (Peoples Global Action, Euromayday, No Border), coming Global Days of Action or camps (Migration, Climat, Mayday) and coming summit Protests (Climat Summit in Denmark 2009, Nato Summit in France/Germany 2009, EU-Summit in Sweden 2009, G8 in Italy 2009).

16.00 (Möllevångstorget) Climate crash!

Blocking cars and having a street party for an inner city without cars and a society without fossil fuels. Enjoy free coffee, snacks, entertainment and politicised mingle in the street. After the action, Klimax invites you to a discussion about activism in connection with COP15 and COP14.

20.00 (Stadshuset) Street Party!

This will be a creative action where you aren't relegated to being a spectator but is rather welcomed to take place. Do you want to write out your crappy boss name in pink all over the street? Are you in a band who want to arrange something? Do you want to tear open the asphalt to plant seeds and grow crops? Do you want to bring your couch? Do you want to rap? Do you want to dance to your revolution? Do you want to meet new friends? Do you want to have a political discussion? Do you want to hand out crayons for drawing on the streets? Do you want to shout poetry in a mike? Do you want to sit at home and wait for the politicians to do something for you, or is it time to take back what is ours? We're going to challenge the power at it's core and the entire world is invited!

Saturday

13.00 (Rosengård) We gather for the demonstration.

15.00 (Rosengård) Demonstration takes off. Join the Anti Capitalistic Action Bloc!

17.00 (Pildammsparken) Demonstration ends with a celebration.

22.00 (Biograf Panora, St Gertrudsgatan 4) LOVE AND RESPECT, IS THAT SO F-ING HARD?

Klubb No Borders, support party for the Asylum Group in Malmö. On stage: Sunshine Rabbits, DJ's Slackers de Luxe, DJ Annika + a spectacular surprise.

There are plenty of things to cry about when it comes to European migration politics, but we should as well celebrate those who climb the walls, challenge the seas and fill in the forms... Come and meet the locals, party with us for the right of movement for everyone! Proceeds go straight to refugees and other migrants hiding from police and other authorities in Malmö. Sunday

13.00-16.00 (Utkanten, Industrigatan 20) Repression and the European security architecture, NATO summit 2009

We want to discuss the so called "European security architecture", that mixes inner and outer security, such as military and police, leading to more European surveillance, repression and war. We will make a proposal to take the NATO-summit in France/ Germany 2009 as a reference to struggle against new police and army collaboration in Europe. Gipfelsoli

There is also a lot to see inside the ESF (note! there's an entrance fee), here are some highlights:

Thursday

9.30 – 12.30 (Möllevången, Amiralen) Freedom struggle is not terrorism

The panel will discuss how Imperialism and Zionism use terror lists and so-called anti-terror legislation to weaken and liquidate liberation movements, left wing organisations and solidarity groups – and how this is happening in countries like Palestine, Basque Country, Colombia, Greece, Turkey, Belgium, Denmark etc. And how we can strengthen international solidarity. Participating: Fighters and lovers

11.00 – 12.30 (KFUK-KFUM) From Genova to Rostock: Civil disobedience and mass blockades – a new strategy for resistance?

Beginning with Genova 2001 civil disobedience appeared as an concept of radiacial actions in the Anti-G8-protests. Last year in Heiligendamm the roads leading to the G8 summit in Heiligendamm were totally blocked. More than 17,000 cops were not able to stop the activists who made their way through the fields to the gates of the security fence. Participating: Interventionistische Linke (Germany), Diktio (Greece)

Friday

14.00 – 17.00 (Rosengårdsskolan) Preventive repression in Europe - the EUs security policy

In the years that have passed since the atrocities of 11 September 2001, the European Union has adopted a series of measures that were previously unthinkable. These measures include the mandatory fingerprinting of the vast majority of the EU's law-abiding population, the mandatory retention of all telecommunications traffic data for law enforcement purposes.

18.00 – 21.00 (Folkets hus Rosengård, Stora salen) The criminalisation and repression of social movements

In the last decade social movements resist against the neoliberal capitalist globalization. Therefore governments increasingly use internal security and (anti-) terrorism frameworks to crack down on such movements in Europe and elsewhere. The Seminar analyseses these restrictive policies; discusses of alternatives, strategies and collaboration to counter the growing authoritarianism in Europe. Transnational Institute

Forget Kyoto – shut down Copenhagen

by Tadzio Müller

R.I.P., or: the death of a movement

The movement's dead! More precisely: the alterglobalisation movement as a common place for movements and activists to meet and to connect their struggles under and against the common referent of neoliberal globalisation, is dead. Don't get me wrong: the movement didn't die the ignominious death of the defeated. In many ways, it also won. And for movements, their victories are also often their deaths, for they live and breathe antagonism, they need an enemy. So what of our enemy? Let's ask Martin Wolf of the Financial Times. Talking about the day when the US Central Bank bailed out a huge bank to prevent the financial crisis from spreading, he wrote: "Remember Friday March 14 2008: it was the day the dream of global free-market capitalism died." So neoliberalism is dead (in some ways), as is (again: in some ways) the movement against it. It seems to have lost precisely that which can forge a movement out of an irreducible multiplicity of struggles. We need a story, a hope, a hook to move: and at this point, the alterglobalist movement is clearly a movement without a hook, without an enemy, without a goal.

The new 'big one'?

But as much as there's a movement without a story, there's also a story without a movement: climate change. Ever since being outmanoeuvred by the G8 and especially chancellor Merkel at Heiligendamm, the European movements have realised that they must develop a position and a practice around climate change or risk irrelevance in this brave new world of green issues. The most advanced fractions of capital and government apparatuses have spotted a great way to create political support for a new 'green fix' to both the crisis of overaccumulation (the problem of too much money chasing too few profitable investment opportunities) that has given us the current financial chaos, and to the legitimization crisis that global authority has been suffering since the power of the story of 'global terrorism' began to wane. In a way, the fact that everybody is now talking about this issue is a massive victory for the green movement – but at the same time it's meant the final nail in that movement's coffin: every single large green NGO is involved up to its neck in the negotiations about the Kyoto-follow up treaty, and thus unlikely to articulate a political position that would diverge significantly from the dominant agendas in the field.

So there's a movement without a story, and a story without a movement – which means that, as it stands right now, there is little hope that climate change will be dealt with in ways that don't simply further the interests of states and whatever happens

to be the dominant fraction of capital. And since the default anticapitalist position on climate change is that there is a fundamental contradiction between the requirements of the continued accumulation of capital (i.e.: economic growth) on the one hand, and the requirements of dealing with climate change on the other, this would seem to be a great opening for a reenergised anticapitalist politics that can manage to connect to people's widespread worries about climate change, to the impression that what is being done (Kyoto, Bali, emissions trading, etc.) is far too little, far too late. These are precisely the situations where radical social movements have the greatest capacity to act and 'make history', when the usual problem-solving approaches don't seem to provide any believable way of dealing with something that is widely perceived as a problem. It's precisely when it seems impossible to find any solutions that openings exist for social movements to expand the limits of the possible.

The politics of pointlessness

In reality, however, things seem a lot more difficult. Looking at it from the perspective of the global North, there are definitely attempts to develop an anticapitalist climate change politics, but each of them is facing a mounting set of difficulties. Seen from here, it all begins in the UK in 2006, with a 'climate action camp' that aimed to 'shut down for a day' a coal fired power station in Northern England, but more importantly, to provide a space for developing new ideas and practices for an anticapitalist climate change politics. The idea of organising similar 'climate action camps' has since then inspired people in Germany, Denmark, the US, Chile, Australia and New Zealand and elsewhere.

I really don't want to talk down the importance of these camps – after all, inspiring so many people in so many different countries is no mean feat – but there is still this nagging question of whether these camps were in fact doing much good beyond satisfying a desire to do something? It feels good to hang out and camp with ones mates and comrades, but what do we want? What can we achieve? And does this whole camping-business, trying to shut down power plants one at a time stand in any relation to the magnitude of the challenge of climate change? To be clear: this is not to say that people shouldn't organise climate camps – only that these camps need to be part of a wider project that gives them some political meaning beyond their highly localised intervention.

So if the UK-movement's way of dealing with the challenge of climate change comes across as somewhat limited in its

political scope, at the other end of the spectrum there's the way the issue has been approached in Germany. There, the radical left is so academic and steeped in the tradition of 'critical theory' and 'deconstruction' that their main response to the challenge posed by climate change has been to engage in a 'critique' of the 'dominant climate change discourse' and the 'hegemonic role of scientific knowledge' in constructing climate change as a crisis. Sure, it's important to remember that the reports issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) come from a deeply conservative institution, and to critically reflect on how recourses to 'scientific knowledge' are often used to shut 'non-experts' out of political debates, but Diskurskritik can't be the only response to the climate change issue. It feels a bit like throwing copies of Adorno and Foucault at a coming flood and hoping that it'll just go away.

"Anticapitalist politics in the global North exist in a sort of timelessness because we either can't or don't dare to think their effects in the future. Ostriches come to mind."

From timelessness to effectiveness

But then, let's be honest: the anticapitalist left in the global North should be pretty used to being political ineffective and marginal, small outbursts of transformative power in particular moments of excess notwithstanding. What does one 'social centre' in Hackney, Kreuzberg or Las Ramblas really contribute to the struggle against gentrification? Does an anti-war-demo in San Francisco really, as a film made on the occasion claims, 'interrupt this Empire'? Does shoplifting, even conducted en masse, significantly disrupt processes of capitalist commodity circulation? To be honest: I don't know, and I think very few people who engage in these practices have a clear idea either. But, and this is the important point, when talking about 'capitalism', anticapitalists don't really have to have an answer to that question. One way of dealing with that is to point to the non-linear dynamics of change in complex (social) systems, meaning that we can't know what effects our actions of today will have tomorrow (think butterfly in Bali and hurricane in Haiti). Or, by referring to an argument that's achieved nearly dogmatic status in anticapitalist discussions: 'look, capitalism hasn't been around forever, it began in some place at some point, so it'll also end at some point' – much the same could be said about the universe! I could go on enumerating the various intellectual tricks that exist to rationalise our relative

political irrelevance, but hope the point is made: that anticapitalist politics in the global North exist in a sort of timelessness because we either can't or don't dare to think their effects in the future. Ostriches come to mind. As does the graffiti sprayed on the wall of a school in Gothenburg that had been stormed by the cops: 'But in the end, we will win!'

And this is where we get back to why it seems so hard for the anticapitalist movement to develop a politics around climate change: whatever rationalisation makes it possible to think that 'in the end we will win' against capital, it's pretty impossible to think that in relation to climate change. Against the usual timelessness of anticapitalist politics, climate change poses the issue of urgency. And the problem then becomes how to deal with that urgency. Both the 'activist' and the 'critical' position described above are attempts to do so, and

both are pretty unsatisfying. The first takes it far too seriously, and jumps head over heels into a political field dominated by much stronger players. The second position recognises that the construction of urgency and the resulting politics of fear are often strategies of domination – but then contents itself with simply criticising that construction.

So how do we deal with this problem of urgency? First, by admitting that it's unlikely, actually impossible, that the politically marginal radical left will be able to effectively slow down the production of greenhouse gases such as CO2, in a world where the accumulation of capital is inseparable from the burning of fossil fuels (someone called this 'fossilistic capitalism'). But we can intervene into the temporality of politics, of governmental 'climate change politics', the role of which is to insulate the speed-up effected by capital from social criticism by creating the illusion that the continued accumulation of capital is compatible with socio-ecological stability: that, in other words, we just need to make a few (preferably market-based) adjustments, and can otherwise continue more or less as we were. The result of this insulation is that the potentially explosive force of the increasingly widespread realisation of this antagonism between capital and a humanity that exists embedded in complex ecological systems is contained, even captured. Captured so as to provide support for a new round of accumulation

(think: 'green capitalism') and the further extension of political regulations ever deeper into our lives.

Forget Kyoto!

So again: the anticapitalist left in the global North can't 'stop' or even significantly mitigate climate change. To assume that we could would necessarily leave us trapped in our timelessness, because we could only ever hope to achieve our goal at some point far, far in the future – out of real time, as pie in the sky. But we can, with our limited strength and resources intervene into the insulation of capital's time from the 'slowness' of genuine democracy. If we once again leave the depressed certainty of our own decomposition and timelessness, if we remember that as movements we have the capacity to be faster than the state, then we can escape from and intervene into their capture and internalisation of antagonistic energies.

And how do we do that? How do we keep open the political space created by the increasingly widespread concern about climate change, which has the potential to produce new ideas and solutions, new possibilities, that might in turn promise to go beyond capitalism? How can there be an intervention into the powerful pressures towards the constitution of a new 'green capitalism', towards an 'Eco-Empire', a global authoritarian eco-Keynesianism? If urgency forces us to think in terms of effectiveness and, what's more, efficiency, how can our small, resource-poor wing of the movement effectively deploy our limited strengths to achieve a maximum outcome with respect to the goal of creating and/or maintaining space for the development of multiple, bottom-up, non-capitalist solutions to the climate crisis?

The answer to this question begins with two further questions, and then takes us back to the beginning of the whole argument. First question: what is the single most important process by which governments are trying to insulate capital from public criticism in relation to climate change? Answer: the Kyoto/Bali-processes, which produce little or nothing that would actually protect the climate (just as an aside: since the signing of the Kyoto-accords, global CO2-emissions have exceeded even the worst-case scenarios projected by the IPCC), and where a tiny bit of emissions reductions legitimate a huge pile of continued production of greenhouse gases – not to speak of the creation of a whole new market in emissions credits (expected to value about 2 trillion US-Dollars by 2020), much to the delight of global capital. The follow-up process to Kyoto, which began in Bali in December 2007, is supposed to be signed at an international summit in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Second question: where do the strengths of the radical global movements lie both

"The large majority of those present shared the fundamental critique, that the Kyoto/Copenhagen-process was more about creating new opportunities for economic growth and political legitimation than about tackling climate change."

in comparison to our enemies and to our more moderate allies? Answer: in the organisation of large-scale, disruptive summit mobilisations. It is precisely in summit mobilisations that we have developed something that could be called 'best practice', where we have before achieved a substantial political effect. In Seattle, we not only managed to shut down the conference by being on the streets, we also exacerbated the multiple conflicts that existed 'on the inside' between the negotiating governments. If we manage to do the same thing again, and to build a political coalition around and momentum behind the demand to 'Forget Kyoto', we would both be able to keep open the political space to discuss potential 'solutions' to climate change that go beyond the reigning, market-driven agenda, but also to provide a focal point and common demand for the emerging global climate movement to rally around. Can Copenhagen 2009 be the climate movement's Seattle?

Postscript: after the camps

After Kent, after Hamburg. Two climate camps in two wet fields outside two coal-fired power stations later. There were moments when I could see it: that creature many have tried to sing into being, the global climate movement. It was present in the discussions in the camps, in the connections that were formed between activists, between struggles, between ideas. As much as the camps had very specific targets, both were also explicitly spaces where we could think through strategies for the emerging global movement. Large workshops discussed the mobilisation towards Copenhagen, and most left with a sense of inspiration and excitement. The large majority of those present shared the fundamental critique, that the Kyoto/Copenhagen-process was more about creating new opportunities for economic growth and political legitimation than about tackling climate change. The interesting debate that followed circled around the question of how to present this radical critique to people who have long thought that Kyoto was all we had to tackle climate change. And how to organise the actions: shut them out of the summit, or lock them in until they have fulfilled a number of 'directional demands' they could never hope to fulfil? The discussions have just begun and will surely continue. But the movement seems to be coalescing around this simple but important position: Forget Kyoto – Shut down Copenhagen 2009! 🍌



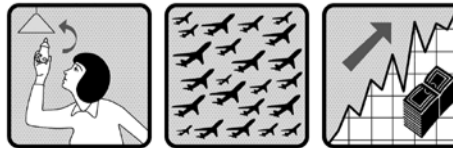
This text is a slightly edited version of an article that originally appeared in Turbulence, a journal/newspaper that we hope will become an ongoing space in which to think through the practices and concepts of contemporary anticapitalism. The Turbulence collective has been involved in various kinds of anticapitalist practice. For more information, check out <http://www.turbulence.org.uk>.



In the event of failing to reduce our CO2 emissions 90% of life may perish. This planet has no emergency exits.



In the event of failing to reduce our CO2 emissions 90% of life may perish. This planet has no emergency exits.



Do NOT panic. Authorities suggest you change your light bulbs. Yet they expand airports. Growth at any cost.



Do NOT let absurd contradictions depress you.

Class, climate change and commons

Planka.nu was founded in the autumn of 2001 after the hot spring and summer of the Swedish EU-presidency, which culminated in the big demonstrations and riots in Gothenburg.

During this time many activists became increasingly aware of the struggles in their everyday life, instead of focusing merely on mobilization to protest on international meetings. So when politicians announced that SL – the Stockholm public transportation company – was to raise ticket prices from 450 to 500 SEK (52€) it triggered a reaction. Members of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Youth Federation, SUF, in Stockholm started the protests which gave birth to the organisation Planka.nu. Since 2003 we are also established in the city Gothenburg and the region Östergötland.

Planka.nu soon became famous because of "P-kassan": a fund that pays the fines of its members if they get caught fare-dodging. It costs 100 SEK (11 €) a month and since the fine is 1200 SEK (128 €) something around 300-500 people in Stockholm find it a good deal every month. The fund has also generated some extra money, so Planka.nu can afford decent propaganda and bolder campaigns. The existence of the fund has also guaranteed the continuity of our organisation, both because of the administrative work that has to be put in every week (but it's not much!) and the firm economy.

An army of fare dodgers

Before we started "P-kassan" fare-dodging had been an individual option when your economy looked weak. But we wanted to make it a collective form of struggle and force politicians and media to regard it as a political question instead of just a matter of security. Commuters have always been poorly organized, especially if you compare with motorists and the car manufacturing lobby. That's why it's been easy for politicians to raise ticket prices when the finances are looking weak. But now the tide is turning and we are putting the problems with ticket-financed public transportation in focus. Planka.nu practises also include following ticket controllers, thus sabotaging the controls by warning commuters.

During the last few years, increasing awareness of the human impact on the earth's climate has escalated the discussions about our infrastructure solutions and the way we plan and build our cities. These discussions haven't gone by unnoticed in the Planka-campaign. In the wake of plans to build a new multimillion-dollar urban highway in Stockholm, we have connected well with the climate action group Klimax.

Planka.nu is a Swedish network of groups promoting free tax-financed public transport and organizing fare-dodgers (people who don't pay for themselves in the public transport system). Since our aim here at this social forum is to establish a European network to promote free tax-financed public transports we want to share our experiences with the Swedish campaign. We will start off with a short historic overview and then present different methods and strategies that's been utilized by Planka.nu. We hope that our mistakes and, especially, successes will be able to inspire other activists.



"A fare-dodger is no longer a poor commuter, she's now an activist!"

To, once and for all, crush private car traffic in our cities and replace it with public transports and a climate smart city planning is essential if human effect on the environment is to be reduced. Together with Klimax we have organized protests outside the meetings of the car lobby and highway loving politicians. We have also released a report on the Stockholm highway entitled "Highway to Hell?" (only available in Swedish). For us in Planka.nu it's impossible to think about solutions to the climate crisis without a class perspective, and the main question for us today is what kind of society we want to build. For we have no belief that business-as-usual with a green twist can save the planet, and for the first time - maybe ever - we have a united academia standing behind us and screaming: commons, commons, commons! And as we see it, they're totally right, the only solution for the climate crisis we can think of is to expand what we see as common goods: first we'll take the subway and then we'll take the streets. And even though the climate crisis is on a global scale we have to start in our own

cities, trying to reclaim the streets from the car industry, organize ourselves and create networks for commuters, activists and all those worried citizens. While doing this we do not only create politics from a common practice, just by saying "here's the barrier, jump here" we create a political subject from disparate people who had no affinity before. A fare-dodger is no longer a poor commuter, she's now an activist!

Cause and solution

Looking back at the last seven years of struggle we can identify two key reasons why the Planka-campaign has been such a success. The first one is that we didn't have to force people into the practice of fare-dodging, it has never been a problem for us that there are too few activists. When we started there already existed an army of fare-dodgers in the Stockholm public transport system, somewhere between five and ten percent of all commuters don't have a valid ticket according to SL. The only thing we really did was to drape this already existing movement in a red flag. By organizing fare-dodgers in the "P-kassa" we got the opportunity to define fare-dodging as a political practice - comparable to civil disobedience - and explain that practice in political terms. From being viewed as something along the lines of shop-lifting or graffiti painting, we have pushed the public discussion about fare-dodging into a context of class, climate change and commons. It's all really simple, we present two problems: people who fare-dodge and the climate change. Then we define the

reason causing these problems: economic inequalities and cities built for the fossil industry. Then, last but not least, we come up with a solution: free, tax-financed public transports.

The second reason, which we believe is the key to our relatively successful campaign, is our durability. Not many one-question campaigns manage to live on and evolve for seven years. The main cause of that is of course, as we mentioned above, that the administration of the "P-kassa" has forced us to continue working with the campaign. But "P-kassan" doesn't comprise the biggest part of our campaign; these seven years have seen lots of other actions from Planka.nu, which serves as a testimony of the persistence of the most active members of the campaign. And also as a proof of the old saying that "if you tell a lie a hundred times it becomes the truth", with the exception that we never told a lie. We just interpreted and explained a social phenomenon in economic terms, something that can be quite hard to get people to understand and accept. //



by Planka.Nu

Second spring of Syndicalism

– trade union reorganization within the SAC

by Mattias Wåg

Lilla Karachi is hardly regarded as one of Stockholm's more up-market restaurants. However, it has a good location at the centre of the tourist district of the Old Town and not very far from the Parliament – once now and then, the MP's stop by to eat.

As in the case of many other restaurants, they are playing around with the finances, wages are not reaching the collective settlements and parts of the salaries are paid under the table. Many of the workers are immigrants lacking work permits – cheap throwaway labour. When sans papier Muhammad Riaz was sacked in April 2007, Lilla Karachi assumed that their action would not result in any problems whatsoever thus not paying the due under-the-table salary. Normally, they would have got away with it: Swedish Social Democrat trade unions do not organize paperless immigrants and do not represent them in workplace conflicts. Syndicalist trade union SAC is an exception – of which Riaz was a member.

The Syndicalists took on the issue during December 2007 and began attempts to bring about a meeting with the management of the restaurant. However, the restaurant refused to negotiate or admit that Riaz had been working on the side for them. In February, SAC gave notice of action in order to impose a blockade on the restaurant and simultaneously began to hand out leaflets and created picket lines outside Lilla Karachi demanding the wages they failed to pay. A highly visible union action that close to the Parliament naturally provoked strong reactions. Maria Abrahamsson, head



journalist of the conservative newspaper Svenska Dagbladet, rampaged because of the "mafia methods" and the "blackmail" of an employer used by the Syndicalists and right-wing politicians began to eat at the restaurant to express their solidarity and mark their hostility towards unions. But when information about black wages and the ruthless exploitation of paperless immigrants came out, the right-wing front began to crack. The restaurant owner was forced to accept conciliation and paid the missing salary.

The Register and Blockades

SAC's blockade and victory was not an isolated event. The self-organized group for paperless immigrants within the trade union had built a register which listed the companies using paperless immigrants and paying salaries way under an acceptable level. When a paperless immigrant affiliated

to the register, s/he also agreed to not work under a given wage level. Within a short time, 500 paperless workers affiliated to the register and the SAC began to win victory after victory. Only weeks after the victory against Lilla Karachi, McDonalds was forced to pay the wage demands of the SAC after blockades during which their hired dubious cleaning company disappeared without paying any wages.

Thus, it is not only in conflicts with small companies that these methods have had success. The syndicalist blockades have proved highly effective against exactly those companies that the trade union movement has had difficulties with; where production is flexible and mainly outsourced to subcontractors. In cases when subcontractors have refused negotiations, the SAC have been able to direct their actions towards the main offices, towards those companies which use subcontractors and then put pressure on them to resolve labour conflicts with the union. In this way, the SAC have managed to win conflicts against multinational corporations such as McDonalds and recruiting companies such as Manpower, where the established trade union movement has had a hard time to organize. Internet among other things has made it easy to quickly coordinate national (and international) solidarity actions against the company which the Syndicalists are in conflict with.

"The blockades have been effective even amongst the paperless. We had a conflict with a cleaning company where many paperless immigrants worked. We gave notice of blockades and the cleaning company did not give a damn. So we went straight to the big hotel chain that contracted the cleaning company in Stockholm. We informed the hotels concerned about the union blockades their contracted cleaning company was about to be subjected to. They called the cleaning company immediately, angry for having to face their conflict. Even though the hotel found out about the conflict on a Sunday, it was resolved within six hours" says Torfi Magnusson, former editor of the SAC members' paper.

However, the blockades have been more difficult to win when directed against the municipal public sector and state companies. These companies do not risk the same economic damage through negative publicity and blockades. Employers' organizations have refused to retreat against trade union actions due to ideological reasons rather suffering economic losses.

Counter-reactions

Even though the SAC is a small trade union, the effectiveness of the blockades has caught the attention of the business world. The counter-reaction has taken shape in two ways. The business world's organisations are warning against the development; according to the Swedish Institute of mediation, the SAC's actions increase more than those of any other Swedish trade union. The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise is promoting restrictive measures against "high-conflict" trade unions demanding the introduction of a "proportional principle" for trade union action and also wishing to forbid trade union solidarity actions and political strikes. At a more concrete level, police have begun to intervene more actively against the union actions of the SAC. The Syndicalists have been operating in a union grey zone – on the basis that the actions were under constitutional protection. In contrast, the Social Democrat trade unions exclusively take measures during periods of transition

"A highly visible union action that close to the Parliament naturally provoked strong reactions."

between contracts to enforce collective wage settlements. When a settlement is reached, a non-strike agreement prevails. However, the SAC make use of the actions in their continuous union practice to attain direct goals within wage negotiations, contracts, working environment and against discrimination without being subjected to the non-strike agreement. Within the so-called "Swedish model", trade union conflicts have been resolved by the involved parties, by the employer and the union representing the worker, while the State has (in theory) remained neutral. In recent years, the police have made a re-interpretation of the right to take union action and have instead begun to treat the SAC's blockades as "expressions of opinion", meaning ordinary demonstrations of opinion. In this way, the actions fall into the usual regulation of order within the law. Thus the police have been able to, often in a violent way, break up the blockades or the leafleting outside workplaces and then charging the participants with offences accordingly.

Rebuilding the Union

The SAC was founded in 1910, soon celebrating its 100th anniversary. Despite its long continuity, base level union



activity has not been top priority within the organisation, but a change occurred around 2001. In the midst of the upswing of the Anti-globalisation movement, in the aftermath of the anti-capitalist protests in Gothenburg, many activists chose to get involved in the union. The importance of returning to the workplaces, that anti-capitalism must begin with our everyday lives, was discussed simultaneously both within and outside the SAC. However, an influx of activists alone was not a guarantee of the return to trade union practice.

"I do not always see it as an advantage to have ex-activists entering the organization. They may be too politically oriented but having zero experience of trade unionism. Many times they have a ready plan for how to work politically although lacking an idea of how workplace struggle is to be done" says Torfi Magnusson. "Everyone agreed upon the importance to strengthen the union practice, but how and what union practice? There, opinions clashed. A series of union conferences became the point of departure. Soon, two lines became visible: those who wanted to commit to rank-and-file members focusing on the workplaces and, on the other hand, those who wanted to strengthen the union representatives and the ombudsmen's role. The polarized discussion resulted in the representatives and the ombudsmen leaving the organization. Union practice was instead re-organized on the basis of self-activity and self-organization.

"The re-organization of the union is about maintaining focus of interest on the workplace. It means to move away from the ombudsman-ism when you have a client relationship between the individual member who has a problem and a hired ombudsman that solves it. The member has to be involved in his or hers issues, has to try to recruit working colleagues and to build sections. It is much about experimenting, see how one may win over an issue before it goes as far as an open conflict" says Torfi Magnusson.



Sans-papiers

- migrant labour struggles in France

For decades, the question of migrant labour has been at the center of political and social debates, and of the fantasies on which capitalism feeds. Except for a brief period after the elections of 1981, when there were a few partial improvements, immigration law has made the status of working foreigners ever more precarious.

The last Ceseda Reform (Law on immigration, residence and asylum) of 2007 is one of the most discriminatory and repressive texts since the Pasqua Act of 1986 which deprived thousands of their right to live and work in France. Apart from it's fundamentally coercive orientation, it is designed to recruit foreigners according to the needs of the national economy and to maleable workers who live in constant fear of deportation. The circular of August 22, 2007 on work permits gives people the hope of having their status regularized without actually guaranteeing anything. Migrants are subjected to a whole arsenal of restrictions without any regard for the constitutional principle of non-discrimination. The criteria listed in that circular remain entirely at the discretion of local authorities. The decision of 18 January 2008 establishes an exhaustive list of occupations open to migrants under restrictive conditions and subjected to bilateral agreements with their countries of origin. As an example, both France and Senegal have concluded a treaty that provides for residence permits for 108 professions. If that isn't a quota system, then what is?

In that same spirit the European Union seeks to get total control over all movement of migrants across its borders, as we can see in the recently passed Directive that authorizes periods of detention up to eighteen months. All proposed legislation points toward more selection, more con-

trol, and more repression. None of this has anything to do with respect for human rights, judicial remedies are very limited. Time limits for raising appeals are being shortened while the conditions for doing so are made more restrictive, limits on arbitrary administrative decisions are being relaxed, arrest warrants are becoming easier to obtain, and the procedures for renewing residence permits are becoming ever more complex.

The Strikes

A strike of undocumented migrant workers began in and around Paris since April 2007. More than 1500 workers in restaurants, in construction, cleaning and domestic workers were involved. CNT, a syndicalist union in France, stands for the regularisation of all humans, be they workers or not. Although this struggle sometimes involved case by case negotiations with government authorities, we decided to take part in order to obtain papers for our fellow workers. Here are two eyewitness reports on strikes started by the CNT of greater Paris.

The "Charlie Birdy" - or how to make a nightclub swing

On Sunday, April 20, CNT members armed with banners, flags, posters, stickers and a supply of food met. Their mission: to take over the bar « Charlie Birdy »,

just off the Champs-Élysées, considered the world's most beautiful street, at least according to some. On the way, we meet up with our five undocumented fellow workers who are going to fight for their regularization. Once inside, the strikers and the CNT members take positions behind the bar and in the easy chairs of the club. Meanwhile others are busy outside flooding the neighborhood with CNT propaganda; "French or migrant, same boss, same struggle", "Workers have no country but international solidarity". The manager freaks out and starts to tear up everything in sight, but our threat to close down the place helps to calm him. Soon enough, the owner turns up with his buddies from the police.

Unfortunately, we have committed no crimes and the police have no right to intervene in labour disputes. With bad grace, the owner agrees to apply to the prefecture of the 92 arrondissement for the regularisation of the five workers. We settle down to stay. Our colleagues who work in the kitchens of other restaurants of the same chain have decided to occupy the place without blocking it. We choose a place from which we can keep an eye on the door, with comfortable couches, a couple of tables and the easy chairs. To stave off starvation, people bring along snacks and a couple of fellow workers stock up enough to last several days. But it isn't all fun and games. That bar closes at 5 AM seven nights a week.

Those among us who are totally exhausted take naps in a compartment in the basement that we have liberated. Meanwhile, others have to stay upstairs and endure the crap music turned all the way up and the dirty looks of bourgeoisie who take us to be bums stretched out on their precious couches. After five o'clock there is the cleaning and the deliveries. It gets exhausting. After forty-seven days of this occupation Moussa, Souleymane and Madikoulé get their papers. That leaves Hadji and Simbala whom the emigration authority stubbornly refuses to regularize. The strike is over, but the struggle continues.

How PastaPapá became a self-managed restaurant between the Champs and the Élysée

On May 20 a new wave of strikes hits the Île-de-France. With support from Solidaires and CNT eight undocumented cooks take over the restaurant of the founder of that chain, for whom they have worked many years. Now it is the turn of PastaPapá, close to the Champs-Élysées, a few hundred meters from the "Market", the "Charlie Birdy", the "Quick" and the "Bistro romain", which have already been taken over.

The beginning was tough. The boss had a fit, started screaming, pushing people around, breaking up chairs, trying to scare the strikers. Next morning he switched over to a lock-out. Within a few

hours he emptied his restaurant, blocked the toilet doors, cut the current and left.

Grateful to be rid of him, we got organized. Cleaning, shopping, cooking; the day to day tasks were planned and assigned. Every evening there was a general assembly of strikers, unions and supporters. Decisions about the legal battle (follow-up on the files) and on the financial resources (concerts, solidarity events) were taken. Food drives in working class neighborhoods proved to be so effective that the strikers were able to cook meals for their colleagues in the Charlie Birdy. After three weeks, a court order forced us to sign a less favourable occupation agreement which enabled the boss to reopen his restaurant. But we stayed with the strikers. After the fourth week, four strikers got a three month temporary residence permit and a work permit. Finally, in August all the strikers received a residence permit.

It is too early to draw final conclusions, but the workers at Charlie Birdy and PastaPapá have shown us a beautiful example of bloody-mindedness and solidarity in their struggle. With the open sesame of the work permit now in hand, the next question concerns their working conditions. Some of these cheap skate bosses will be hearing from the black cat again real soon. //

created a level of union activity not seen within the organization since the thirties. The syndicalist ideas of organization had its heyday between the 1910-30's was born out of a class composition consisting of unskilled part-time and flexible jobs has had a renaissance under today's scattered production, whether one is describing it as post- or hyperfordist and corresponds to a need created by flexible employments, paperless immigrants and precarious part-time jobs. The second spring of the "other" worker's movement has begun. //

For more information about the swedish syndicalist union visit: www.sac.se

The precarious

- Stockholm after the Gothenburg riots

No one likes to hang out at offices after the working day is done, but when we found ourselves squatting the lobby of the biggest commuting contractor in Stockholm we felt that staying late hours at the office need not be so bad after all.

THIS WAS DURING A CONFLICT over union representation that started in the subway, but after taking it to the streets we went one step further and took it to the contractors' headquarters. The union representative brave enough to speak out about safety hazards in the Stockholm subway got fired, and we as part of the extra-parliamentary left as well, as daily commuters, saw it as an attack not only on the unions but as a threat to our physical safety as commuters. So we decided to join the struggle under the name "United commuters of Stockholm". Since the leadership couldn't be found in the subway we went to their headquarters. After a few weeks of recurring demonstrations in-house at the HQ we went down again into the subway underground, but this time as a strong collective. We opened up the turnstiles and gave commuters the option of bypassing the bosses and capitalists by paying the ticket money directly to the people driving the trains instead, in support of their upcoming strike. This way we tried to make it possible for people both to imagine and take part in a direct organization of commuting by the people, for the people. It was a success, to say the least.

In just a few hours we raised hundreds of Euros in support of a non sanctioned strike and convinced them to break the law (by passing the turnstiles without tickets) to support it. One of the subway company bosses accidentally described exactly what we were trying to do:

-This conflict has turned into a hockey game, and everybody's cheering for the underdog. And now people from the stands have charged the rink and started fighting". This was one of our first experiments with reinventing forms of workplace struggle and it was some of the greatest times we have had to date. It climaxed with a political strike that put the Stockholm subway to a grinding halt. Of course we didn't win all of it, but the form of struggle that we participated in inventing is hopefully just the start. But to really understand how we ended up there it's necessary to start a bit earlier:

Summit hopping vs. turnstile hopping

There is no need to repeat the common history of the altermondiale movement in general, but a few words to realign the experience some of us had coming out of the "summit-hopping" years and bring us up to date. After the wounded in Gothenburg and the murdered in Genoa there was a feeling among us that the space and potentials that erupted with the Seattle events had come to a halt. The summit struggles had a rejuvenating effect on the ability to visualize a critique of capitalism

as a totality, but the potential for struggle needed to base itself in the particular and local. With inspiration from Marx and the Operaisti we turned to militant inquiry (a kind of methodical documentation and analysis) to sketch up where the points of desire, rupture and conflict were to be found in our day to day-lives. We found that most of the people that organised within our movement shared the same fluid - in every sense of the word - situation. Most of us had been employed in three or more different jobs in the last year, almost no one had a permanent lease but moved around in different forms of short-term or semi legal housings and the common spaces that intertwined all our lives were commuting, part-time studying and recurring bouts with the unemployment agency.

These are of course some of the features commonly associated with the term "precariat" - the new fluid subject of immaterial production, affective exploitation and 24/7 subjugation. The theory behind the precariat seemed in line with what we had been discussing even though some of the conclusions as to the liberating aspects of this development

"After the wounded in Gothenburg and the murdered in Genoa there was a feeling among us that the space and potentials that erupted with the Seattle events had come to a halt."

seemed premature. We don't agree that Marx's labour theory of value is rendered obsolete or that the suggestion that the means of production are now already in the hands of the working class, albeit "virtually". But even though the concept of the precariat seemed irking for clearer definition it opened up new ways to think about workplace struggle and our place within it. The basis for rejecting or accepting this new concept must be the concept's accuracy and, as this is Marxist theory, its utility.

The starting point for organizing ourselves is always the general features of the people involved. Since we only worked in jobs with a high rate of turnover, our workplace structural power, either in terms of rigidity due to labour laws or by the means to build a strong workplace unity, were all but nil. But in similar terms to the "social factory" we could find other points where our "associational power" ("the various forms of power that result from the formation of collective organisation") could come to the fore. We started talking about generalizing concepts where possibilities of collectivity could be found.

A goal: more free time and dole

If locality/location was earlier the main

prerequisite for resistance in the factory, the office or the universities (all of these modelled on the prisons) this now seemed less of a possibility for us. Our workplaces never brought enough people together for long enough time to start forming a collective.

The places where we most frequently met up with others with the same living conditions, were the unemployment agencies and on short courses in the universities where social subsidies could provide us with short moments of rest between bout of shitty jobs. So we started organizing there. In Sweden unemployment nowadays means being forced to sitting up to eight hours a day applying for the few jobs that are listed, that you'll never get. So we went there to discuss different ways of escaping the drudgery of these disciplining structures in society. Where were the loopholes, how did you wrangle out some free time or more dole? We opened up our own infrastructure



Happy action group

show up for my blockade, I'll show up for you" worked well for the short struggles that ensued. Using a common signifier for all those struggles made sure that the threat value of the singular struggle was multiplied. When the bosses looked for information on the internet about the impolite youths blockading their front steps, they found several reports of earlier conflicts and figured that they were up against a much larger group than they had thought.

Get it free- all together.

Desire/Needs became the third organizing principle. We all needed or wanted free commuting, free culture or... well, what do you want? The same problem of individualization came to the fore. If one of us went to the theatre to ask for free enjoyment with respect to her precarious life it would probably have little effect. But we found, as others before us, that if you ask around on the internet how many people are feeling inclined to see a theatre, and then march up together to watch it without paying, this is a whole different matter.

These are of course just tentative concepts that we've come to use to better describe and think about our political activities. We hope that by putting those out they could echo with some of the concepts and struggles developed by other activist collectives around Europe and perhaps together we could overcome the temporary standstill that the European left seems to have suffered after the slowing down of the altermondiale movement. If there is a future for us, it resides in the concrete and day-to-day struggles that make up our lives under capitalism and our search for lives beyond it. Nostalgia for struggles passed does us no more good than passive utopianism, waiting for a wave of struggles yet to come. We have to reinvent our forms of community and our ways of organizing and we have to do it as a joint effort. Hopefully this text can be steps towards making this happen. Please get in contact with us and describe your own experiences. We are just getting started. //

Feminism is part of the class struggle

In this article we seek to summarize the situation of women in Sweden. We offer an analysis of why we haven’t progressed farther and why we need to keep up the struggle. Many examples used are specific to Sweden, yet typical of the ongoing love affair between capitalism and patriarchy, in Europe as well as globally.

Every day we read in the newspapers about new proposals hatched up by Sweden’s neo-liberal government. One day brings cut downs in social funds. Another day it is tax deductions for domestic services, making it cheaper for the well-off to employ a maid or a nanny (this is known as pigavdrag - ”maid deductions”), or a new child care allowance for people who stay home and take care of their children (vårdnadsbidrag - care support). We know that these schemes, that seem to bring us back to the 1950s, are bad and that we need to stop them, but often we fail to discern how each proposal paves the way for further proposals to be implemented. Lacking such an analysis, we risk once again ending up viewing issues as separated from each other. A feminist and/or leftist movement with no insight into the way issues are interrelated is doomed to fail.

Groups pitted against each other

Conservatives and liberals know this, and they are clever enough to divide us, playing one group against the other. As a result, we witness how senior citizens are led to believe that their well-being depends on closing the country’s borders, or how federations within the trade unions compete to get the biggest piece of the little cake. Government officials talk with a straight face about “normal people” profiting from reduced social funds. “Normal people” are apparently understood to be young, healthy, employed people who don’t need any help from the social system.

The trade unions refuse to help undocumented immigrants, out of fear of wage-dumping. An historical precedent for this is the male trade unionists who, based on the same fear, opposed the employment of women. The idea of struggling for an equal pay for men and women never entered the heads of these men. After all, it was quite convenient if the wife had all day to clean, wash, and cook. Unpaid household work was, and still remains, the historical plight of women.

A new market is created in the households

Socio-geographical mobility is severely restrained by a privatized, deregulated real estate market, and certain living areas come to be consolidated as low-income areas. On the opposite side of town we find the gated ghettos of the rich, where poor people come every day to work as maids.

This is made possible on a bigger scale than before by the recent tax deductions (pigavdrag), a way to use tax money to feed capitalism’s need to create new markets, this time in the domestic sphere. Thus, class and ethnicity conflicts enter the households of the wealthy, and sweep gender conflicts under the rug. One woman

“It doesn’t matter if a man, woman, or undocumented immigrant does the work as long as someone is exploited.”

replaces another, the man is exonerated from responsibility, and the conflict of the sexes remains unresolved. Meanwhile, the maid still has to clean her own house when she gets home since she can’t afford to hire someone else, but the government is obviously not concerned about her predicament.

How to produce new and cheaper workers

After the pigavdrag was introduced in July 2007, a meeting was held between government representatives and staffing company managers. The staffing companies complained about the troubles they had in finding people for the maid jobs. One of the solutions presented was to shorten the free language courses for immigrants, since “anyway, the best place to learn Swedish is at work”.

This suggestion hasn’t been implemented yet, but is frequently discussed. This is a very clear example of how the neo-liberals in government fuse together several types of oppression to maintain control. Capitalism, to stay

vital, must depend on a reserve of unemployed labour and a divided working class. A desperate worker is always preferable, which means women and immigrants are consistently targeted.

Women become more dependent

Vårdnadsbidraget delivers the final blow meant to send women back into the household. After the long struggle to free women from their homes, women are now offered 3000 Swedish crowns (ca 320 €) per month to stay at home with their children. This is obviously not an offer aimed at single mothers: it is impossible to survive on this sum in Sweden. Those lucky women who have a real man who



often involved fighting the men of the labour movement. Just as the capitalists have tried to stop any reform that would diminish their power, working-class men have done exactly the same thing when it comes to women’s autonomy.

Even so, women have always supported the struggles of working men, because they rightly regarded these struggles as their own.

Solidarity - but only in one direction

A telling example is the 1899 bookbinder conflict in Stockholm, where women played a leading role. The workers, half of them women, went on strike demanding higher wages. The employer agreed to raise the wages for the women but not for the men. The women wouldn’t accept the bid, but instead continued the strike until the employer caved in and raised the men’s wages as well.

Unfortunately, men didn’t show the same level of perceptiveness when the situation was reversed. In the early 20th century, the Swedish government wanted to prohibit women from working at night. This affected women who worked as bookbinders, seamstresses, and typographers. Women in the Social Democratic party and in the trade unions demanded that the worker’s movement should fight for women’s right to work under the same conditions as men. The men responded by accusing the women of running the conservatives’ errands.

As a result, these jobs, with pay slightly above average, were no longer available to women. The prohibition of female night work did not, of course, include badly paid jobs, which women were still allowed to perform. The law was not repealed until 1962.

Capital is gender neutral

To understand why working-class men have colluded with capitalism, we must understand the logic of patriarchy. Men gain from the subordination of women, in the first place through the division of labour between men and women, but also in terms of the big share of unsalaried household work carried out by women, and in terms of the sexual subordination that women are subjected to. Despite all this, we claim that men also lose something when they choose to participate in patriarchal society.

The working class can never really move forward if those who find themselves on its lowest rungs are forgotten. Capitalism wants the greatest possible amount of work carried out at the lowest possible cost. This is facilitated by a white, male and Eurocentric labour movement which fails to practice solidarity with, for example, women and undocumented immigrants. Capitalism, in and of itself, is gender-neutral. It doesn’t matter if a man, woman, or undocumented immigrant does the work as long as someone is exploited. However, capitalism makes use of existing structures to legitimize the exploitation, divide the working

class, and render certain forms of struggle illegitimate. ??

The personal is political

One of the main slogans of the women’s movement of the 70s was that “the personal is political.” This parole put many “new” questions on the agenda. The personal experiences of women were lifted to a collective level, which made it possible for these experiences to be articulated into demands. The main point was to make clear that women’s personal subordination had nothing to do with personal failings, but was instead the product of structural inequality. The relationship between men and women wasn’t given by natural laws, but rather created and organized by society. To realize that this relation was not a biological fact was to realize that it was possible to change it.

We mustn’t forget how it is all connected

The autonomous Left in Sweden has, in its eagerness to throw out identity politics and sectarian tendencies, also thrown out a deeper understanding of how things are connected. We have thereby lost the capacity to understand that solidarity is more than an empty word. Solidarity implies supporting groups that you aren’t a part of and fighting for questions that at first glance seem not to concern you, because you understand that doing so accords with your long-term interests. We are never stronger than the weakest link, and if we struggle to advance the positions of the most oppressed, we will all move forward. We can only win if we see how things are connected and work together. Attack is the best defence! 🗡️

Radical Women’s Assembly Utkanten, 18/9 kl 14.00

If you want to discuss this text and other issues with us come to our seminar! It will be an assembly on the situation of women in Europe. We will start by talking about the myth of Sweden as the paradise of equality for women, and then invite you to describe the situation of women in your country. How is the situation of women on the labour market, in unwaged work, everyday struggles (childcare etc), sexuality.

We wish to focus on the issues where class struggle and feminism meet. What collective solutions exist for women in your country? What do you need? What types of women’s organization exist? In what way do women take part in workplace struggles and the trade unions? After these presentations we will discuss in smaller groups how we can act together: actions and cooperation now during the social forum and in the future. www.kpf.se

Neoliberalism, Patriarchy, and Women’s Movements

by Claudia von Werlhof

Claudia von Werlhof is a professor of political science and women’s studies at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, and a long-time feminist and anti-capitalist activist. Her books include “Women, the Last Colony” 1988, “There is an Alternative. Subsistence and Worldwide Resistance to Corporate Globalization”, 2001, “The Globalization of Neoliberalism, its Consequences and Some of its Basic Alternatives”, 2008. The following text is a shortened and slightly revised version of a recent essay published in B. Krondorfer et.al.: “Frauen und Politik”, Vienna 2008, pp.146-156.

Neoliberalism and Women

Within the neoliberalist agenda, the dismantling of public services, the sale and privatization of socialized industries and the deterioration of the welfare state affect women in particular. Many of the most decent job opportunities for women disappear – without substitute. The new opportunities are all insecure, “precarious”. Women increasingly find themselves in situations where the gap between labor and salary becomes enormous. While being forced to find wage labor, the only jobs available are poorly paid and often temporary. At the same time, living expenses are rising and education as well as health services are being privatized. Many women cannot afford such services any longer – many more will not be able to in

“The intellectual capacity of women should not be used to affirm the system or to turn it into a “fetish”. It should be used to become dissident and subversive.”

the near future. This means even more (unpaid) work for women because it is women who are expected to take care of the sick, the elderly and the young.

We can call this the second phase of “housewifization”, i.e. the process of demanding women to do unpaid work both within the household and outside. Its second phase is characterized by the imminent collapse of traditional workforce reproduction, both in quantity and quality. This becomes obvious in the “Gebärstreik” (the refusal to give birth – women’s own “labor strike”), as well as in the increasing number of divorces, poverty-stricken families, destitute elderly and neglected children. The commodification of everything will reach its limits. However, the system cannot allow to establish regular wage labor conditions – in particular with regard to unpaid housework. This poses a remarkable contradiction to the usual claims of those advocating commodity production and its expansion.

Women have long demanded “wages for housework”. Today, housework has become partially commercialized and is losing its subsistence character, i.e. it is no longer non-commodity production. Housework remains organized like subsistence work, but it generates a particular commodity (at least potentially): human labor. Housework becomes the most important mediator between life/subsistence and market/commodity. Its transformation into “obvious” commodity production and wage labor, however, is not accompanied by legal provisions that would guarantee real compensation or salaries. This means that despite of housework being “socialized”, there is no “just” salary – or no salary at all. What we are witnessing is an increasing “housewifization” (instead of a “proletarianization”) of women’s labor in general.

Today, the same applies to men. Labor conditions are “informalized” and “precarized” everywhere. I call the result “housewifized commodity production” (“wageless commodity production”). This can take on the form of “commercialized” housework (“new maid question”), precarious employment, outsourced contracting, and even indentured labor or outright slavery. In this sense, neoliberalism not only fails to overcome the modern principle of not remunerating the reproduction of the workforce (so vital for capitalism’s profitability); neoliberalism extends, even generalizes this principle. The “cheap gender” becomes the model for cheapening labor in general. Most of today’s profits are based on this development.

The development is strongest in the global South and East. Not only does the unpaid housewife remain characteristic in these regions, but there are also masses of small commodity producers who earn practically nothing: small farmers, marginalized producers/laborers, and the new slaves and “housewifized” wage laborers of the outsourced industries in the “free production zones” or “world market factories” where contractors produce everything for corporations from sneakers to computer chips. Today, the labor conditions of the North increasingly resemble those of the South, while those of men increasingly resemble those of women. Underdevelopment reaches everywhere. Instead of the Third World becoming like the First, the First increasingly becomes like the Third. It is simply more profitable not to pay wages – or only low ones. It has always been the “housewife” and not the “proletarian” who represented capitalism’s ideal workforce. Today, this ideal is implemented globally. Most have remained oblivious to the logic of this process since they were made to believe that housework is indeed not labor but a part of “woman’s nature”. In consequence, housework’s role as the basis for a profitable capitalist economy has been notoriously denied.

The socialist claim that the liberation of women is possible through socializing/industrializing housework and through women entering the wage labor market has been proven wrong. There is no viable perspective for women. Neither will they survive based on housework and a providing “bread winner” alone, nor will they earn a decent living as wage laborers. Reality contradicts all ideologies claiming to improve the conditions of women. The workforce increasingly counts as nothing more but a “natural resource” that needs no (or hardly any) remuneration. Accordingly, a highly qualitative reproduction of the workforce seems no longer necessary. Free wage labor and “normal wage labor conditions” have reached their end. Capitalism, however, has not. On the contrary. This contradiction is today’s main contradiction of labor. It becomes ever more obvious that commodity production is destructive rather than creative. Commodity production means the destruction of resources. The whole world is used and exploited, including its people (as



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>> “forces of labor”). Capitalism is literally cannibalism. So far, there have only been few who have acknowledged this. The Austrian Joseph Schumpeter has called this process “creative destruction”, suggesting creation to be its dominant feature, not destruction. In light of today’s scarcity of resources, climatic changes, and the increasing problems of “human ecology”, it seems impossible to sustain this illusion.

Women’s Response and Women’s Movements

The process of neoliberalism seems to leave two options for women. Either they partake as much as they can (because they feel like there is no other way or because they too have come to believe in “progress”) or they step out of line and start looking for alternatives. Several problems keep many women from doing the latter: notions of patriarchy that are way too superficial; a general lack of understanding about the connections between patriarchy, capitalism and neoliberalism; and the fact that an ever increasing number of women has bought into the notion of progress. There exist divides between women – mainly along the lines of North/South and East/West – and much confusion. Western women, for example, have for the most part accepted a capitalist and patriarchal logic and, accordingly, display hostility towards body and nature. This phenomenon is part of the patriarchal venture itself and not restricted to Christianity. Many women give up on being creators of life. They have accepted the patriarchal notion that they can only overcome repression, exclusion and inferior social status by denying both their body and womanhood.

As a consequence, women are being transformed, and actively transform themselves, from a “truly bodily” (leibhaftig) witch to an “objectified” housewife, and from there via technology to a “gender” machine, work machine, sex machine and/or birth machine. The transformation of women veers ever more towards their abolishment/replacement – a process that many women themselves support today. Women’s politics have become the politics of technology. For many the question has become how to best overcome their body and womanhood. Many try to escape a patriarchal female identity by patriarchal means. This is only logical of course. It is a logical response to the desolate conditions that women have been facing for a long time and that are inherent in the patriarchal capitalist system. However, detaching oneself from one’s own body is ultimately impossible and undesirable. No objectification without body? Maybe. But no life either.

The postmodern attempt to embrace new “identities” or to distance ourselves from those which define us now is usually a Pyrrhic victory for women. It also leads to abandoning solidarity because women – fulfilling patriarchy’s needs – anticipate their own technological replacement and try to transform and replace themselves. The patriarchal hostility towards the body and womanhood can nowadays be found within women themselves. Some women have their breasts amputated and many become anorexic in order to escape their bodily womanhood through a kind of self-mutilation. The women’s movement is the attempt to escape conditions which provide no future. For a long time, this has meant to escape the household since women cannot survive as housewives and mothers alone. However, the prospect of finding liberation in wage labor is today more daunting than ever.

What then, is our future? Do we even have one? What we have is not working anymore, but the apparent alternative is not working either. “Independence” proves not to be the answer. While we cannot afford to be mothers alone, we can not be proletarians or capitalists either. People fall into the trap of enlightenment when they start looking for equality where there is difference – for example between men and women. In the most extreme cases, one tries to eradicate difference technologically, for example women’s ability to give birth. Ultimately, this means an attempt at abolishing women altogether – at least as mothers. Of course the attempt will be unsuccessful, but it will do huge damage to life. Buying into patriarchal thought and the patriarchal project is what I consider the main problem of women and women’s movements today. Especially in the global North. Women have begun to accept the patriarchal allegations that, as “women”, they are inferior, non-productive and worthless. This should not surprise us too much. They have been forced to believe in this as “truth” long enough.

I think we can see this as a prisoner phenomenon. Living within the system means for many that there is no escape, no outside – just as if we were in prison. It appears as if the system has incorporated everything. It appears as if there is indeed no more nature – or that it only exists as a source of exploitation. It also appears as if womanhood outside the system’s definitions is not (or no longer) possible. The only option that apparently remains, is to take “power” within the system – unfortunately, taking power within the system translates into complicity. The challenge is to distance oneself from the system altogether. The liberation of women does

neither come from adapting to patriarchy nor from abolishing womanhood. It comes from the inner, spiritual detachment from capitalist and patriarchal assumptions. The intellectual capacity of women should not be used to affirm the system or to turn it into a “fetish”. It should be used to become dissident and subversive. The conditions we are facing today must not be accepted as an unchangeable reality.

The liberation of women happens neither through housework nor wage labor. It happens through liberation from patriarchy and its latest form, capitalism (including socialism). The wrong turn that has led women into patriarchy has to be rectified. Women have to find their way out of the patriarchal system. There must be a future for women, in which they are not forced to deny their body and motherhood or to partake in their own depreciation. There must be a future for women in which they will not have to defend patriarchal interests as their own.

What is at stake is that women, in a radical and fundamental way, bid farewell to self-hatred and the patriarchal criteria that judge them. Women must remember their own culture which has existed everywhere on this planet – and which still exists, right among us, often as so-called “second culture”. It is revived in many alternative movements. It is no surprise then that most truly alternative movements are women’s movements. Women can regain their joy for life. Women can reject the nihilism of global patriarchy and the systematic destruction it implies. Women can recapture the richness of life. In fact, this is their only option. 🍷



Malmö - a segregated town, among many

by Mangla

There is often talking about the segregated immigrants and suburban residents. There is less talk about who we are segregated from; the upper class. The ones which live in their segregated communes, like Västra Hamnen in Malmö (newly built area close to the sea).

How often is that focused on as a problem from the perspective of integration? Segregation is about class. The ones who can’t afford to live where they want to, gets to live where they can afford it. The ones who can afford can go living by the seaside and confiscate their own bit of shoreline. A shoreline that should belong to everybody. The question stands; who is really segregated? Is it us; who can’t make the choice when it comes to residency, or they, who have so much money they can choose to live in a luxurious neighbourhood with a grand view?

Segregation is often put forward as a problem based on ethnicity; immigrants are segregated from the Swedish society, its often said. But it’s really not that some people with other ethnical background than Swedish who has come here from other countries have chosen which part of town in where to settle. It’s about that people are poor. Sweden is a racist country which consistently discriminates and oppresses people not considered as “Swedish”. So immigrants (often) remain poor; because Sweden has made them a part of its social class, the underclass.

The poor who can’t afford to live in a luxurious estate by the sea is not poor because

they made bad choices in life. They are poor because some people live off other peoples work. Maybe your boss lives in Västra Hamnen, or an area similar to it? The very same boss taking in the profit from your work. What had she/he been left with if no one worked for her/him? No capital at all. Then you would have met as neighbours in the same rotten apartment on the fifth floor with a broken elevator.

Malmö is a class society, as well as the rest of Sweden. Which type of living compartments is Malmö building right now? What priorities are made? Turning Torso (a twisted skyscraper, sort of) for the upper class, the Citytunnel (a new train tunnel through Malmö leading over to Copenhagen) to remake Malmö into a more attractive town for rich Danish people to move to, new shopping malls to increase consumption? But what about the ones left outside, who can’t afford? Or want something other? Malmö is remade, but the problems arising from increasing differences between the social classes is ignored. Poverty, cut downs, housing problems. The inner areas are crumbling, while the outskirts blossom.

The solution lies not in “integrating” people from different classes with each

other; the solution on the problem is to erase the differences between the classes. Then segregation, for real, wouldn’t have been a problem. Take out the rich, and you have one thing left; the rest of society. Which is us. They are the exception and we are the real Malmö!

We have as much right to Västra Hamnen as the ones with cash enough to occupy the whole shoreline. They complain when we come there to swim and relax. They think we make too much noise and see us as criminals. But who’s the real criminal? It’s from us they have stolen their riches from the beginning. It’s our money they used to buy their apartment. So, isn’t it time to realise, that their homes really are ours?! 🍷

Mangla= expose to hard press, beset, go hard at.

Mangla is the antifascist part of the network ”Malmö frihetliga”. Women organized or interested in organizing in the autonomous left can through the network get to know each other and have a forum in where to share experiences, strategies and do political together. We

are a forum where you do not only work with feminism, but also anti-capitalist questions, class struggle and antifascism. Malmö frihetliga is organized in a separatist way, which means we are open to all women.



From thoughts to future actions

Now that you’ve read this far, join the mobilization towards:

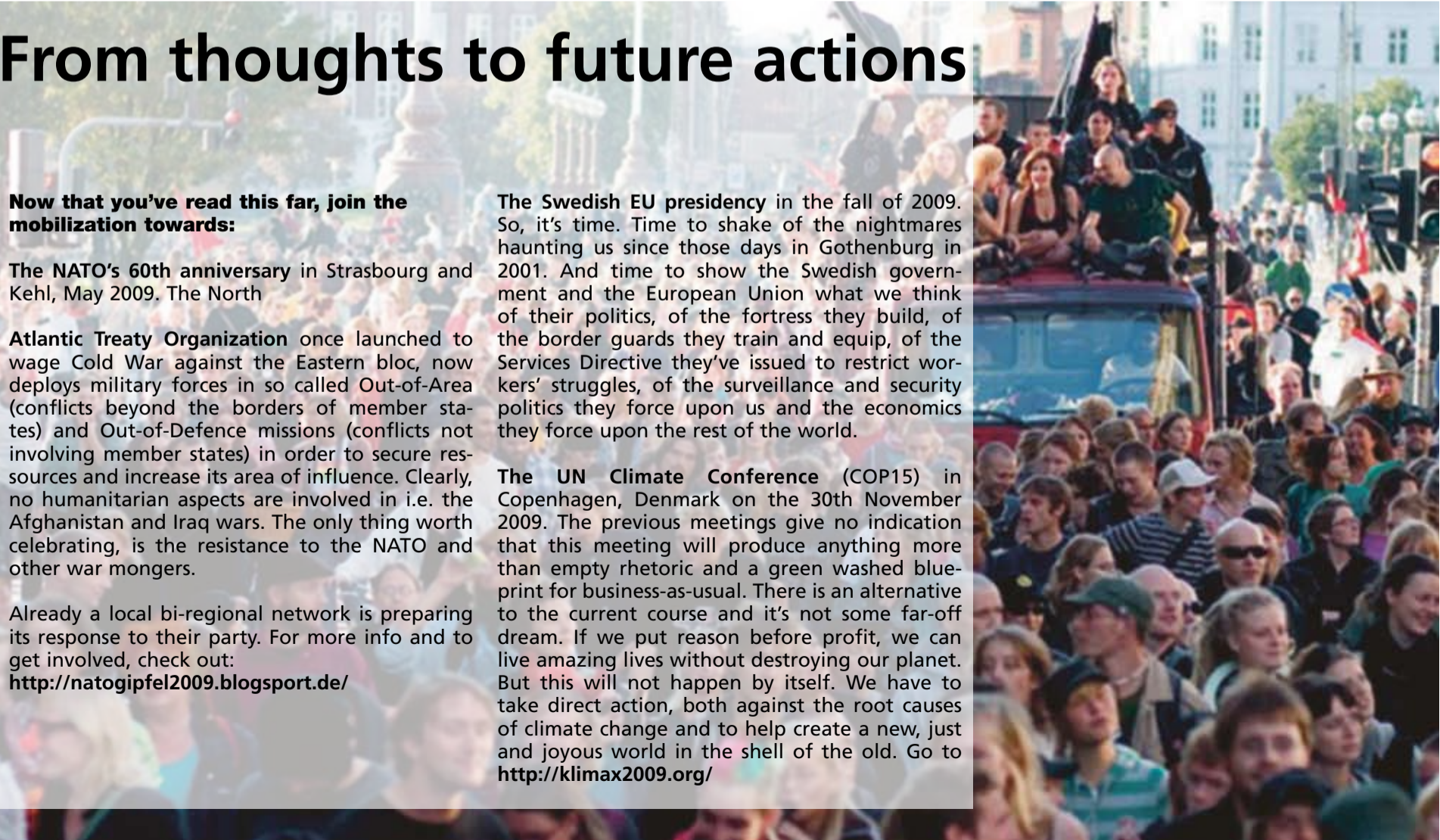
The NATO’s 60th anniversary in Strasbourg and Kehl, May 2009. The North

Atlantic Treaty Organization once launched to wage Cold War against the Eastern bloc, now deploys military forces in so called Out-of-Area (conflicts beyond the borders of member states) and Out-of-Defence missions (conflicts not involving member states) in order to secure resources and increase its area of influence. Clearly, no humanitarian aspects are involved in i.e. the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. The only thing worth celebrating, is the resistance to the NATO and other war mongers.

Already a local bi-regional network is preparing its response to their party. For more info and to get involved, check out: <http://natogipfel2009.blogspot.de/>

The Swedish EU presidency in the fall of 2009. So, it’s time. Time to shake of the nightmares haunting us since those days in Gothenburg in 2001. And time to show the Swedish government and the European Union what we think of their politics, of the fortress they build, of the border guards they train and equip, of the Services Directive they’ve issued to restrict workers’ struggles, of the surveillance and security politics they force upon us and the economics they force upon the rest of the world.

The UN Climate Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen, Denmark on the 30th November 2009. The previous meetings give no indication that this meeting will produce anything more than empty rhetoric and a green washed blueprint for business-as-usual. There is an alternative to the current course and it’s not some far-off dream. If we put reason before profit, we can live amazing lives without destroying our planet. But this will not happen by itself. We have to take direct action, both against the root causes of climate change and to help create a new, just and joyous world in the shell of the old. Go to <http://klimax2009.org/>



Rozbrat – a free space in an unfree world

Rozbrat is Polands oldest squat. During the years it has been the center for much activity in the Poznan region, hosting anarchist and syndicalist meetings and conferences, and housing several political projects including a library, archives, a concert space and workshops.

The Rozbrat squat is situated in the Western city of Poland – Poznan. The city is one of the richest ones in Poland, it's close to the German borders, the unemployment rate is much lower than in the other parts of Poland, there is an International Trade Center plus a lot of hotels for its guests, there's a football stadium that will be one of the stadiums for Euro 2012, there's one the best awarded shopping malls owned by one of the richest people in Poland. And yeah, the richest guy in Poland is from Poznan, him and his wife were given a ground for their shopping mall by the neo-liberal president of Poznan on very doubtful grounds, now he's legally sentenced for this. He's also sentenced for banning



In a city of and for rich people

The existence of the Rozbrat squat in Poznan is therefore even more surprising. In this purely capitalist surrounding, we've been there for fourteen years now. From being a housing project, our squat grew to a social-political-cultural center, organizing dozens of different events every year: gigs,

several demonstrations in the city. At one of them, the infamous gay pride parade in 2005, sixty people were illegally arrested; finally, no one – apart from the president – was charged.

Poznan is also a city where F-16 aircrafts have their base, that is located within the borders of the city, this being very dangerous and burdensome for its neighbors and all inhabitants of the city. Poznan is an expensive city, which is troublesome for around hundred thousand students living there. In the last years, the costs of living have risen rapidly; from the prices of food, rent, tram tickets - almost everything gets more and more expensive every year.

parties, exhibitions, lectures, picnics, debates, sports competitions and what is the most important: loads of demonstrations and protests throughout the years. Having the autonomy behind the fence of our squat, we've always tried to be as open as possible and not to stay closed within our autonomy – we'd rather call our space a free space – free to new ideas of living in a better reality, without exploitation, oppression, capitalism, social control, fascism,

sexism. We take part in local protests, from workers strikes, to local communities' struggles with the authorities, through wider protests of other oppressed groups, to people discriminated against sexually, racially or economically. For all those years, the eviction threats were rather minor and didn't cause much mobilization.

The peaceful times are over

The peaceful times ended in January, when a debt collector, together with cops, came to our squat with a warrant from the court,

drilled open the locks and came in to estimate the price of the ground of one of the parts hosting the squat. Rozbrat is situated on three parts of ground owned by three different owners. The biggest one was owned by a company which disappeared roughly fifteen years ago after taking a big loan from a bank. So, years later, the bank has come to a moment when they can auction the ground to get their money back

Because squatting is a purely social issue and it is an alternative for living in this world – an alternative which is dangerous and inconvenient for this system.

– the space has been occupied for fourteen years though. We raised red alarm; all our friends, supporters, comrades were informed that the auction could happen any day now. It's been over seven months now and nothing has happened.

Probably there are some legal problems in the court but we're not giving up. After the visit of the debt collector in January, we decided to create as much publicity about Rozbrat as possible. We're happy to see hundreds of people coming to our events,

Taking it all back: Hi-jack! Reclaim! Party!

We're living in a city where ordinary people are expected to pay when their rented flats are sold on the market. The price is so high that most of us can't get hold of the big stacks of money needed, and we are forced out into the urban periphery.

There we are met by abandoned public spaces making us dependent on other profiteers than the old slum lords. A great deal of our life takes place at work or downtown, where we recreate and consume experiences in stores and cinemas. Our only option to get to these places is public transport, which is hardly free of charge.

When we move through the city we can't but notice how more and more of the public spaces are enclosed in malls and department stores, like Entré Malmö (new shopping mall) and Hyllie (new suburban area of Malmö). In this private space big businesses try to make sure that every potential activity is streamlined in to a mode compatible with

the reproduction of capital. Our movements are plotted and planned through aisles of the supermarkets and are monitored by CCTV cameras, private security guards and store workers. Any behaviour that disrupts the logic of capital leads to eviction from this closed off area.

Meanwhile – Victoria Park, the first "gated community" in Sweden, is being built in the upper class ghetto of Limhamn. The series of luxury flats, totally cut off from the outside world by walls, cameras and guards, makes the class divisions of our city visible where there before only had been social and economic borders dividing rich areas like Limhamn from working class estates like Rosengård. Streets

once open are being cut off as the city becomes more and more fragmented as a class society is built into its very structure. In places like Victoria Park the people inside hope to stop the unwanted (that is us) from getting in. In the south and east side of Malmö things are different. The new CCTV-surveillance and increasing police presence around Möllevången is not aimed at keeping the unwanted out. Instead they try to control the people who live here and discipline us. The line between the controlled and the controllers is made thicker and clearer.

But we've had it with this crap. There is no reason to think that the same politicians who have done their very best to destroy

this city and replace it with bubbles of super rich surrounded by a multitude of workers ready to service them would come to our aid. We are going to take back the urban environment and the streets of central Malmö, just to do what ever we feel like. The hi-jacked space will house a party that will be outside their control. We will all create a place where we can reclaim the power from the rich bastards and crooked politicians who otherwise run this city and have the guts to present it as a solution to the neo-

liberal exploitation.

See you at 8 pm, Malmö City Hall (Amiralsgatan) for Reclaim the Streets party. **///**



dozens of guests visiting us every now and again, getting a lot of support from other cities and countries. We've renovated our bar and small concert hall and we're planning more. We're waiting for the hour zero but it's not waiting for the end. We know that we will not disappear. With this place or another – we will always be here.

Scene ghetto or open space?

Recently, thanks to the international squatting days of action, there's been a wide international debate on the future of squatting in Europe. We also took part in it. The Western squatting movement focused much of its power to create autonomy within the borders of capitalist reality. Did it work out well? Many squatting communities became scene ghettos, they don't have much to offer to the world outside. That's what we were always aware of and tried to fight with the ghettoisation of squatting. More and more free spaces are being repressed and evicted, but on the other hand more spaces are falling into the process of gentrification, people from poorer communities have to pay higher rents, not mentioning other costs of surviving, the working law is being changed by the neoliberal government that would make us work more and for less money.

Our surrounding is becoming an environment for rich people only, for money, not for free thought. We, as squatters, anarchists and so on, are under severe attack by the authorities that want to take our free spaces away from us. If we want to keep them, we have to change tactics. We have to show our social face. Because squatting is a purely social issue and it is an alternative for living in this world – an alternative which is dangerous and inconvenient for this system. As people that still have free spaces we should use them as much as possible to be open for everyone who rebels against this reality of wealth and power. Together we're stronger. Let's build a big free space around our squats – a space of free thinking minds that will also be a support for each other at all times.

Stand with us!

We, at Rozbrat, are trying hard to get outside, to get people from outside to visit us, to work with us, to have fun with us. It works better, it works worse, but we don't feel alone. On the final day, we will not be alone. For sure.

Be ready for the news from us, visit us anytime you can, it's less than 300 km from Berlin. We couldn't come to ESF because we're just celebrating our 14th birthday party but we'll surely see you in the streets! **///**

Check www.rozbrat.org for more information and updates on their situation!

Collapsing the European security architecture

by Gipfelsoli
Prozessbeobachtungsgruppe Rostock
MediaG8way

Each protest enables us to draw conclusions on how to do things better next time. In the same way, we can draw conclusions from the mobilisation against the G8 summit 2007 in Heiligendamm on how to achieve successful and broad resistance.

APART FROM THREE large self-organised protest camps and an international infotour in the months leading up to the summit, there were attempts to have international exchanges and establish networks beyond Germany. The decision was made not to respond to the G8 climate debate but to frame the protests in terms of other self-determined topics the movement was focussing on: migration, antimilitarism and global agriculture.

Looking ahead to the 60th NATO anniversary in Strasbourg and Kehl and the G8 2009 in Italy, but also to the swedish EU Presidency 2009, this text takes up these points to propose a campaign against the new "European Security Architecture". We outline some developments in police cooperation on a European level and call for a kind of antirepression work that goes beyond a simple critique and a scandalising police violence, and that is coordinated on a European level. Such political antirepression work would have to take new forms of social control seriously as an integral reference point for radical movements.

No future for freedom

At the latest since September 11th 2001, not only the foreign policy coordinates of the European Union (EU) have changed. Under the motto "Terror Comes Home", far-reaching changes in European Home Affairs, along with police operations towards a "preventive security state" have been implemented. Whilst control of the external EU border has been stepped up with new technologies and cross-border cooperation, surveillance and control within the EU is also steadily increasing. Additionally, there are foreign military and police operations on behalf of the EU in so-called "third countries". The EU intends to be a model for a security complex that can be exported to other countries in the EU's capacity as a "service provider". These developments are not only directed at migrants and "security-critical" behavior. They also offer a welcome opportunity to control the re-emerging alterglobalisation movement.

Since 1999, the EU has defined Europe as a "space of freedom, security and law". In the future there will be more juridical and police cooperation in criminal and civil affairs. Home Affairs ministers dream of an EU ministry for Home Affairs. On the police level, EU bodies have received more competences, and new institutions and programmes have come into existence. In 2007, the so-



called "Future Group" met for the first time. This group is made up of the ministers of Home Affairs of the countries due to hold the EU presidency in the next four years. The EU commissioner for "freedom, security and law" is also part of this group, along with the director of the "Border Protection Agency" Frontex. The Future Group calls itself "informal", but it has considerable influence on Home Affairs with respect to the EU Treaty as well as the 2007 Lissabon negotiations. The foundation of the Future Group coincided with the EU presidency of Germany in 2007. Under the motto "Living a secure Europe", the German Home Affairs Minister successfully pushed through a tightening of European internal policies.

Cross-border cooperation

Until now, cross-border police cooperation has only existed between some countries under the Pruem Treaty. This found its expression, for example, during the G8 summit 2003 when German police participated in an operation against demonstrators in Geneva with 500 police officers and five water canons. The Pruem Treaty was a test case and has subsequently been integrated in the "legal framework of the EU". Thus it now applies to all EU countries. All police departments will now have access to DNA and fingerprint databases as well as vehicle registration data. Access to information on "terrorism suspects and travelling violent criminals" will be made easier in order to prevent travel or to "quickly recognise and detain rioters". For the European Football Championship in 2008, 2 000 German police officers were ordered from Austria and Switzerland.

As an intersection for police cooperation, the competencies of Europol in The Hague are not restricted to gathering data and advising police forces of EU member states. An EU parliamentary decision in January 2008 meant that the "European Police Office" became an EU agency for the "coordination, organisation and implementation of investigative and operational measures". The realms of responsibility have been extended to "organised crime" and "other forms of serious crime". In future, access to the "Europol Information System" will not require a "liaison officer" anymore.

These "liaison officers" are sent by the police forces of all member states to European control and decision-making bodies and are key figures in the policing of major events. Officially they have an "advisory function". In practice, they function as important nodes in informal police cooperation. They have access to all the databases of their home countries and can, for example during summit protests, provide information about different political groups. Liaison officers coordinate entry restrictions which led to 600 people being denied entry into Germany during the G8 2007, because they had been "conspicuous during previous G8 summits".

Europe – a space of surveillance and control

The cooperation between police and intelligence services is being expanded. In Germany, the Federal Criminal Investigation Office and the "Verfassungsschutz" (Office for the Protection of the Constitution) recently moved to a "Joint Terrorism



”In France, passengers who are the first to stand up to protest against a deportation on their flight risk being charged with ringleadership.”

>> Defence Centre”, where they have separate offices but meet daily for joint briefings and share the canteen space. This cooperation led to the surveillance of the anti-g8-movement and the start of investigative operations under the premise of terrorism suspicions. German terrorism legislation allows for far-reaching interferences in people’s privacy and allowed a record to be taken of all mobile phone numbers present at a meeting of the radical left dissent!-network against the G8. As people affected by these operations have been able to access their files, it has come to light that these investigations were carried out by the police but initiated by the intelligence services.

Internet surveillance has increased across Europe. The German Ministry for Home Affairs has started a European-wide initiative to fight ”international terrorism”, entitled ”check the web”. On March 8th 2007, Europol’s ”information portal” went live. German police and secret services intend to cooperate with a joint ”internet monitoring and analysis project” in the future. Such ”internet surveillance centres” are planned across Europe. The intention is to partially automatise the monitoring of websites and subsequent archiving in police databases. New software scans the databases to find ”entities”, which are conceptual analogies or connections between persons and objects (”semantic technologies”). The security industry is developing programmes that are able to search in different file formats. This way, text, audio, video and gps data can be analysed together. Prosecution agencies of various countries already use software that enables the ”prediction of crimes” as a result of data analysis. One company describes this process as an ”evolution in fighting crime”.

More police repression and law enforcement can also be observed in other countries of Europe. In Italy, several trials in relation to the G8 2001, as well as demonstrations against militarism and fascism concluded with sentences between 6 and 12 years for the accused. In other countries, police laws are being changed in order to give police more powers against ”security-critical behaviour”.

Radical changes have been made in Europe under Sarkozy and Berlusconi. In France, passengers who are the first to stand up to protest against a deportation on their flight risk being charged with ringleadership. New legislation in Italy has allocated 2,500 military troops for assistance in police operations to ”maintain public order”. The police intend to fingerprint any children of Roma origin found unaccompanied in the streets.

The new Austrian legislation on security police makes the racist control of migrants easier. The German Federal Police now have more competencies both for missions abroad and for domestic affairs, for example against political protests. EU member states implement European directives and ”harmonise” their national legislations, for example with respect to data retention. Telecommunication and internet providers now have to store data and hand it over to the police on request. This enables the police to reconstruct communications and create ”relational diagrams”. Protection from surveillance is increasingly restricted. The users of encryption software in Austria and the UK should be obliged to give the police their passwords. Home affairs ministers are currently conducting a centralisation of all European police databases.

Institutions and research programs of the European security architecture

In order to have more control over mass protest, for example during G8 summits, new institutions and research programmes have been developed. European police forces conduct joint trainings and maneuvers to control demonstrations. In European police academies operational tactics for ”crowd management” are designed. The European Police Academy (CEPOL), based in Hampshire, UK plays a crucial role: ”CEPOL’s mission is to bring together senior police officers from police forces across Europe – essentially to support the development of a network – and encourage cross-border cooperation in the fight against crime, public security and law and order, by organising training activities and research findings”.

Following the summit protests in Genoa and Gothenburg in 2001, in 2004 the EU initiated the research programme, ”Coordinating National Research Programmes on Security during Major Events in Europe” (EU-SEC). EU-SEC coordinates police departments of EU member states and Europol and publishes a handbook for summit protests. Police are advised to observe protest movements, to exchange data, to enforce travel bans, and to undertake aggressive media strategies in order to delegitimise resistance. In the form of questionnaires, information is gathered about European groups and individuals, their action forms, websites, mail addresses, international contacts, preferred travel routes, means of transport and accommodation.

EU-SEC is coordinated by the UN working group ”International Permanent Observatory on Security during Major Events” (IPO), based in the Italian city Turin. IPO advises governments on the appropriate security architecture for major events. IPO services are free. At the moment, IPO is putting together a ”Handbook for G8 states”. Official operational areas since its foundation in 2006 have so far been the G8 summits in St Petersburg and Heiligendamm, the World Bank/IMF summit in Singapore, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Vietnam. Also, the Olympic Games 2008 in Beijing and the G8 summit 2008 in Japan were coached by IPO.

Border control: the militarisation of migration control

With the extension of the EU member states and the abolition of border controls, the new external EU borders are being technically upgraded. They include nightview technology, automatic analysis of video surveillance and high frequency cables that can measure and communicate the water concentration of nearby bodies. New joint headquarters have come into existence. Through the extension of the Schengen Information System II (SIS II), more data is available to police forces. Fingerprints and biometrical data of migrants are to be stored in the Visa Information System

(VIS). Home affairs ministers complain about the insufficient police control of migrants and have demanded the use of RFID chips (chips with radio waves) in passports. These chips could, for example, acoustically identify the bearers of an expired visa, without this person actually having to show his/her passport.

With the creation of the ”Border Control Agency Frontex” in Warsaw, EU-wide ”migration control” now has another pillar. The General Director, Ilkha Laitinen, a Finnish border officer, summarises the ”Integrated Border Management” of Frontex in the following way, ”All those who don’t deserve to be and whom one does not want to have on one’s territory, have to be stopped.” In a ”risk analysis center” prognoses of waves of migration are undertaken, information is passed to the relevant border police departments and concrete measures are ”recommended”. Frontex has a ”central technical toolbox” for member states’ control and surveillance of external borders. Frontex conducts operations together with national police forces (”Frontex Joint Support Teams”). Although Frontex has no forces of its own to fight migration, there has been an extensive increase in the arsenal of border forces of member states. The Italian Carabinieri for instance have new boats, helicopters and surveillance technology. According to its own publications, 115 boats, 27 helicopters, and 21 aeroplanes are documented in the central register of Frontex. Besides trainings, Frontex also undertakes research programs. For example, they research and recommend the use of ”micro-helicopters” for border observation. Director Laitinen has expressed his wish for Frontex to have more of its own resources and operative forces in the future.

Police and combatting counter-insurgency abroad

The Lissabon Treaty also addresses ”reforms” in the field of military affairs. The ”European Security and Defense Policy” asks for a ”gradual improvement of military capacities”. The Lissabon Treaty also plans ”reforms” within the field of military politics. The aim is for the EU to have armed units at its disposal by 2010.

In January 2007 the first EU Battlegroup was declared fully operational; in 2006 such a unit was already considerably involved in the EU military deployment in Congo. There are also means for intervention in ”third states” that are much less visible: The ”European Gendarmerie Forces” (EGF). The EGF is a paramilitary police unit founded and developed at the G8 summits in 2002 and 2004. It should be able to mobilise 3 000 police officers within 4 weeks. Forces are so far provided by the Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy and Portugal. The EGF is supposed to take over police control after military deployments in crisis areas, as well as ensure ”public order” during the ”occurrence of public unrests”. The non-domestic deployment of police forces is considered a ”civilian instrument”. So far, maintaining ”public order” in ”third states” has been the task of the military, although it always has cooperated with police units. For example in Bosnia, members of the German Army were trained by Italian Carabinieri. The official tasks of the EGF include ”the entire spectrum of police deployments, civilian authority and military command, control of local police authorities, criminal investigation activities, activities for the provision of secret intelligence, property protection” etc. The statute of the EGF does not exclude a deployment within the EU. The headquarters of the EGF are located in the Italian city of Vicenza at a Carabinieri base. Likewise, in Vicenza the EGF have their own academy (COESPU) where their own forces as well as units of other countries are trained. The academy is financed by the G8 states. Also, senior police officers of Pakistan and Kenya have undergone COEPSU training in ”riot control”.

The significance for radical movements

”The distinction between international law in times of peace and in times of war is no longer appropriate in the face of new threats”, Schäuble, the German Minister of Home Affairs has stated. The German chancellor and the head of the Federal Criminal Investigation police have further conceded that, ”the separation between internal and external security is obsolete”. What do these developments mean for the political practice of radical movements in general and for the alterglobalisation movement specifically, except ”even more repression”? A debate about repression should be an integral part of the practice of radical movements. It is clear that the margins for left interventions have not increased in light of and after 9/11. Nonetheless, we think that it is not only the speed and the degree of repressive measures that has changed. The entire social matrix within which radical left politics is situated is shifting. The quality of surveillance and social control has taken on another form. Apart from technological developments, above all this has to

do with the transnational coordination of control agencies and the ”interdependency of internal and external security”.

But we see an opportunity in using this continued narrowing of the freedom of movement as a chance to build new alliances that will bring about broad social debates and unexpected interventions. A conjunction of classical antimilitarism, antirepression, and migration politics is a clear option. The degree to which these new measures and institutions touch upon the daily life of every European should offer sufficient starting points for a practice of proactive disobedience against this evolving European Security Architecture.

Against the European Security Architecture

The decision to mark the 60th anniversary of NATO with jointly hosted celebrations in Strasbourg (France) and Kehl (Germany) has already caused a great deal of activity amongst the antimilitarist left in a number of countries in Europe. The established peace movements in France and Germany plan to focus their protests

Police are advised to observe protest movements, to exchange data, to enforce travel bans, and to undertake aggressive media strategies in order to delegitimise resistance.

on the Afghanistan war. However, the NATO summit would also be an excellent opportunity to draw attention to the complex structure of the ”global security architecture” with its participating institutions. Military and police forces currently maintain a repertoire of repressive instruments based on new technological developments. Computer-supported commandos, investigative software, warmth and body fluid detectors at national borders, tasers etc. Military and police remits are being ever more synchronised, both on a legislative basis and through joint operations, but also with the creation of common organisations such as the ”European Gendarmerie Force” based in Vicenza. Eurocorps, the French Foreign Legion and the central Schengen Information System are all located in Strasbourg, where next year’s NATO conference is to be held. These facts provide ample reasons for an anti-NATO mobilisation to focus on developing a radical critique of the militarisation of social conflict within the EU and beyond.

The G8 in Italy provides an opportunity to raise public awareness about and criticise the international police coordination against summit protests. Some of the measures and institutions have been installed under the direction of Frattini, the former EU Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security, now foreign minister under Berlusconi. The EU-SEC programme

Gipfelsoli brings you messages about globalized solidarity and the protests against unsolidary globalization. <http://gipfelsoli.org/> Information and updates on the development of European police cooperation and the militarisation of the EU can be found on <http://euro-police.noblogs.org/>.

against mass political protests was initiated after the G8 in Genoa. The UN initiative ”International Permanent Observatory on Security during Major Events” is being coordinated from Turin. We can assume that after the experiences of the G8 2001, the G8 2009 will be a matter of prestige for all of these agencies. Their preparations for the G8 2009 have probably already begun.

A decision by Italian social movements to focus on militarism as a prominent mobilisation issue against the G8 2009 could combine the critique of militarised foreign politics with resistance to the new coordinates of European domestic politics. Resistance against the ”policia- lisation of internal and external security” could connect with the movement against the NATO basement Dal Molin in the Italian city Vicenza. A protest movement that has mobilised for several major demonstrations against the extension of the basement has been active there for several years. As the seat of the European Gendarmery Forces, Vicenza could become the symbol of resistance to the paramilitary organisation of European police forces. Moreover, after the Kosovan declaration of independence, ”Eulex”, the

In 2009, the EU Commission’s ”Hague Programme for Freedom, Security and Justice” will draw to a close. Changes and targets for a ”European Security Architecture” will be codified in a new 5 year programme under the Swedish EU presidency. European police cooperation, Europol, Eurojust and Frontex will be optimised and made more efficient. ”COSI”, a ”Standing Committee on Internal Security” within the European Council will pave the way for interior ministers to create an overarching EU Interior Ministry.

We propose to use the European Social Forums (ESF) and other summit mobilisations as one of the moments for the European coordination between groups working on police issues, antirepression initiatives, and supportive lawyers/legal activists. Internal policy developments concerning surveillance and control in Europe could be brought together there. We would be interested in finding out where resistance to the ”European Security Architecture” already exists. How are demands formulated and publicly articulated in other countries? How do activists relate to discourses on fundamental rights and civil liberties? Connecting to these practices we could start looking for common perspectives and, sooner or later, collapse the ”European security architecture”. //

This text should be understood as a first outline of a contribution to the international ”Summer of Resistance” 2009. We look forward to more English reports, position papers and discussions. We can be reached under euro-police [at] so36.net.

Europa sicher leben | Living Europe Safely | L’Europe, bien sûr(e): [http://euro-police.noblogs.org/galle- ry/3874/Europa_sicher_leben.pdf](http://euro-police.noblogs.org/galler-y/3874/Europa_sicher_leben.pdf)



Repression, Austrian Style

– A Model Case for Europe?

by Antirep. 2008

Since May 21, 2008 ten animal rights activists have been sitting in pre-trial detention. The dubious charge? “Forming a Criminal Organization” according to §278a of the Austrian Penal Code.

THAT OMINOUS MORNING began with 23 house searches and other raids all over Austria. The raids were carried out by police from the Special Forces, which in many cases rammed down doors and entered with drawn pistols, waking terrified residents and then “securing” them against walls and putting them in handcuffs. The police not only seized all computers and cell phones, but everything from dog toys to toothbrushes, in order to get illegal DNA samples from people not even named in the search warrants. The raids have already been massively criticized for not conforming to legal

However, “Danger of Committing Crimes” can continue to justify detention for up to a year, and this will be the only possible grounds to extend the detention at the next evaluation in September.

There remain few other opportunities for the activists to be released. Nine of the activists filed appeals against their prolonged pre-trial detention, but the Appellate Court upheld the detentions in a decision on July 16. The only current recourse for the activists is to file a complaint with the Supreme Court on the basis that the detention viola-

intentionally (think human trafficking), attempting to achieve large monetary gain or enact a serious influence on politics or the economy as a whole, and attempting to hinder prosecution (beyond usual means, think establishing fake businesses as a cover). Never mind that the crimes of this particular “Criminal Organization” consist of minor property damage. In fact, legally the whole construct is a house of cards waiting to fall. The prosecutors do not have evidence to pin specific acts of property damage on individuals, so instead they have constructed a “Criminal Organization” to be held accountable for all crimes supposedly having a connection to animal rights from the past 10 years. The continuing detention can only be seen as an attempt to coerce the activists into making statements and gain evidence that not even the extensive house searches could provide. Some activists were offered immediate release if they disclosed the passwords to their encrypted hard drives and e-mails, confirming this suspicion. The fact that the activists exercise their right to remain silent has been used against them at the evaluations of their detentions. This attempt at intimidation will not work!

If this feels like déjà vu, it’s probably because it is all frighteningly similar to repression in Germany based on §129a/b (“Forming a Terrorist Association”). Yet there are differences: Rather than simply exploiting §278a in order to investigate and gain insight into leftist structures through massive surveillance, the prosecutors want to earnestly get a conviction. Thus §278a cannot only be seen as a pretence for investigation, but as a real threat to criminalize activism (to compare, only one per cent of trials in Germany

based on §129a/b end in a guilty verdict.) However, like in Germany, this attempted criminalization has met with resistance and solidarity with those imprisoned. We will not accept this attack on activism and our structures, we will not let ourselves be intimidated and we will continue to agitate for freedom for all political prisoners. Solidarity is a weapon! We are all §278a!

We demand:

- the immediate release of all 10 activists
- an end to all trials and investigations
- the abolition of §278a in Austria and §129a/b in Germany
- the dissolution of all special commissions

Update: All the detainees were released on September 2! For further information see the web links! **““**

More info:

antirep2008.lnxnt.org
at.indymedia.org

Lawyers are expensive – organize benefit parties and donate money to:

Account Nr: 01920013682
Bank Code (BLZ): 14 000
Owner: Grünalternative Jugend Wien
Purpose: Antirep 2008
IBAN: AT551400001920013682
BIC: BAWAATWW

By challenging the law, we can expand the field in which we act

While this is written, the hunt for a mysterious Danish “FARC-agent” who goes by the name Carlos Mono has been started by the request of information from the Colombian police.

Till now no one has found Carlos, unfortunately, cause according to the available information, he should be working with a grand solidarity project, which involves ten Danish workers unions. The ‘Carlos Mono’-hunt can be thought to have been started because the Colombian authorities is trying to inflict the result of a trial in which me and six other activists from Fighters+Lovers is charged with support of terrorism. We are accused of this because we through t-shirt sales wished to support a poster workshop run by the PFLP in Palestine and a radio station for

FARC in Colombia - things that in our eyes have characters of a traditional solidarity project. In December 2007, we were found not guilty of the accusations, but the states public prosecutor appealed the court ruling and now we are headed for the high court in September. Our acquittal is non the less a major victory for resistance movements and solidarity activists. Among other things it became clear that the terror lists from the EU don’t have any legal validity.

The trial against Fighters+Lovers and the search for ‘Carlos Mono’

are examples of how work of solidarity is being criminalized as a consequence of the new anti-terror laws. “The war against terror” has lead to a big number of new laws, which makes it possible to criminalize political opponents and to monitor people’s everyday life and their political activities. This is a limitation of our political freedom rights. And that makes our work and life in general more difficult. When a person is being monitored, they get a feeling of lack of freedom. I myself have experienced this feeling. Surveillance is a refined method of control that disciplines and oppresses.

Fighters+Lovers is a collective action that strikes the anti-terror legislation. We didn’t break the law, but we challenged it. The anti-terror laws are constructed in a way so that every political opponent can be categorized as terrorists if the governing politicians wish to do so. In the anti-terror legislation there is no distinction between terrorism and legitimate resistance. That is an enormous problem for us, who works with political activism and especially for those who fight a legitimate struggle for freedom. Because of this we must challenge

those politicians who think they can force us to keep our mouths shut by frightening us. We shall not accept surveillance and we shall not accept that our activism is being criminalized just because we disagree with our governments. We always have to be disobedient when our freedom is being limited. Therefore we will keep doing spectacular and boundary pushing actions of solidarity and expand the field in which activism functions. **““**

Repression worth billions

More prisoners, more prisons

by Henry Ohlsson
Editor-in-chief, Kåklad

Over the last decade, prison sentences in Sweden have steadily increased both in number and length. The prison population today is the largest ever. Just a couple of years ago, prisons were overcrowded and the need for room was immediate. Prisoners were forced to share cells and in some prisons to sleep in dining-halls, offices, shower rooms and corridors since there was no longer anywhere else to keep them.

A logical solution to the problem would have been to “restrain oneself”, put an end to the increasing number of prison sentences and their length, as well as get the inmates out of prison. For instance by releasing them earlier on parole or offer them a facilitated reintegration into society through a placement in a family care home towards the end of their prison time.

But instead the solution was building new prisons. Over the past years new prisons have popped up like mushrooms out of the ground all over the country. Completely new correctional facilities have been built, existing ones have been extended and a couple of run-down penitentiaries were torn down to make way for new ones. Unused hospitals have also been rebuilt into prisons. This happened with the old hospital in Sala that is now the Salberga prison, security class C (a closed facility, the highest level of security being A and the lowest F). The solution was cheap, but the result was less successful. The Prison and Probation Service had no former facilities on the spot and all personnel were completely inexperienced. Because of the immense need for room, the prison was rushed into opening and soon warning signals told of serious incongruities. The Ombudsmen of Justice (JO) received more complaints on Salberga by prisoners than the prisons Hall, Kumla and Tidaholm had together. The criticism in the media was massive and parts of the problem remains today.

Security standards never before seen in Sweden

The run-down, older prisons that got torn down had been open facilities. For instance, the open Skänninge prison was demolished and replaced by a closed facility with room for 250 inmates. Even though many prisoners appreciate that the cells are new and contain both toilet and shower, they are worried by the Prison and Probation Services’ continuous development from openness to closed prisons. Several open prisons have been shut down and replaced by closed facilities with walls, barbed wire, cameras and modern surveillance technology. Without an actual need for it, security standards are being increased everywhere.

But to which cost? What will happen in the long term to prisoners, whose conversations are being listened to and monitored by screws (Correctional Officers)? And who are being watched while on the block? How does it affect you to consistently have to be aware of what you say or do?

“The kind of electric fences employed surrounding the prisons with the highest level of security in the country, Kumla and Hall, is only found in one other place in the world - on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.”

In some places, completely new prisons are being built, amongst others in Östersund. What is being built there is a new high security prison, the result of former Minister for Justice Tomas Bodströms initiating of the “super prison” after a couple of escapes that attracted attention in 2004. Here, the Prison and Probation Service talks about high class security, security of a kind never before seen in Sweden. Repression worth billions. Already the Prison and Probation Service utilizes measures of security which are rarely seen internationally. The kind of electric fences employed surrounding the prisons with the highest level of security in the country, Kumla and Hall, is only found in one other place in the world - on Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

What we shall reap

Kumla, since its opening in 1968 notorious for being the hardest prison in the country, will soon have more than 300 places a it has been extended with what is called a reception (where all the prisoners sentenced to four years or more are initially placed) and a new bunker block where prisoners who are said to be inclined to escape or commit new crimes are being placed. It is deplorable that focus is always set on security. Not a single thought is spent on what will be reaped ten years from now

of what is sown today. All prisoners in Swedish prisons will be released sooner or later. But what kind of people will be released into society when every effort has been used to keep them locked down and repressed? Institutionally damaged lunatics? Anti social monsters? The thought is terrifying.

While money is being spent on new prisons and upgraded security measures, hardly anything is being spent on treatment, education and reintegration. New prisons are expensive. So are metal detectors and electronic noses searching for drugs. Even if our politicians add extra billions, the Prison and Probation Service is financially down on its knees. Therefore the personnel close to the prisoners, the ones who run the activities that at least resemble some kind of care, are being fired. Many prisons don’t have any psychologists employed, at other facilities it can take years waiting to meet one. Everything that is not security is cut back. To be able to finance inhumane monster prisons, things that could help people get a better life, or at least to withstand, are being restricted.

Ignite!

The politics of the 1960’s and 1970’s when Sweden was seen as a role model for a humane correctional system, when prisons were emptied and torn down, when pri-

soners were being offered care, treatment and education, today seem like a parenthesis. But the prison struggle is glowing, both inside the prison walls as well as here and there in outer society. Let’s hope it will ignite again before it is too late. Raze the walls! **““**



The Malmö District Court attempts to prosecute 26 Syndicalists who held a picket line at Lilla Torg on December 1st 2006. Support the pickets!

Support Malmö26 on your phne by sending the text message
“motkraft 5” to donate 5 Swedish kronor
“motkraft 10” to donate 10 Swedish kronor
“motkraft 15” to donate 15 Swedish kronor
to the telephone number 72550

Malmö26 solidarity account: pg 80 99 23-6
For more information visit: www.malmo26.sac.se



Kåklad is a Swedish prison paper that has been published since 1999. Its aim is to present the views of incarcerated people on the other side of the walls in the public debate. It focuses on the politics of correction and imprisonment as well as other oppressions as seen from the inmates’ perspectives. It is being produced by inmates, former inmates and unpunished people. More information can be found on www.kakkladet.com.

From Salem to Stolberg: Hero Tales, Right-Wing Sacrifices and Martyrs

by AK Sub.version

“I have just heard that a Kamerad [common German term for right-wing peers] has been killed by four Turks at around 11 pm on the 4th of April. He was walking home with a friend who had just attended the annual meeting of Aachen’s NPD [see below] chapter. We assume that the Turks had already been waiting for him there. Cowardly, they stabbed the 17-year old who later died from his wounds in the hospital.” (Ingo Haller, NPD, 05.04.2008)

“In the Rhineland town of Stolberg, a 19-year old man was stabbed Friday night during a confrontation between two groups of youth. He died from his wounds in the hospital a short time later. It took only a few hours for neo-Nazis to claim the young man as a ‘Kamerad’ who had been killed by ‘a group of foreigners’.” (redok, news portal, 05.04.2008)

“What we know at this point is that two groups of youth met on the evening of the 4th in the Rhineland town of Stolberg. One group included neo-Nazis who had attended an NPD event; the other group included migrants. A physical confrontation ensued which led to the death of a person belonging to the first group.” (Press release by “AnifaschistInnen aus Aachen [Aachen Antifascists]”, indymedia, 08.04.2008)

FOLLOWING THIS EVENT, first publicized by Ingo Haller, Chairman of a local chapter of the Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands [Germany’s National Democratic Party], NPD, right-wing extremists soon organized a number of demonstrations in Stolberg, a small North Rhine-Westphalia town near Aachen.

Only hours after the release of Haller’s statement, neo-Nazis were already debating the event in their online discussion forums. It was evident that the extreme Right intended to use the death of the young man for their purposes – far beyond Stolberg and North Rhine-Westphalia. Little wonder that this pleased the local neo-Nazi scene. Only one day after the young man’s death, 160 neo-Nazis gathered at the place where the confrontation had taken place. Migrants saw themselves

exist conflicting opinions on this within the extreme Right), he was in any case “a young German”.

It was with phrases like these that the neo-Nazi scene tried to turn Stolberg into a Main Event – an event that would enable nation-wide, even continent-wide, mobilization in order to march together and unify a divided scene. Before long, references to Salem, like the following, became frequent: “This atrocious murder reminds us of the brutish slaughter of our Kamerad Daniel Wretström in Sweden. I hope that the martyr who fell yesterday will be commemorated with the same dedication. There ought to be a huge remembrance event on the day of his death every year.”

In Salem, a suburb of Stockholm, a young man with connections to the neo-Nazi scene was killed during a confrontation with



lized for the 12th of April, while the NPD announced a march for the 26th.

The first march showed that, despite the above-mentioned rows, the hope to unify a splintered scene around Stolberg had not been completely in vain: 800 neo-Nazis gathered despite of a mere four days of mobilization. Most noticeable was the strength of a brown “black bloc”, the by far largest contingent of the march, acting very militantly. The police responded with repression and violence. This further fueled the neo-Nazi propaganda as it allegedly proved once more the need to unite and show determination and strength in the face of the enemy. Worch – “heroic” as ever – now announced that he would also join the NPD rally on the 26th. 400 right-wing extremists marched through the small town of Stolberg that day. These two marches saw not only all of Germany’s “neo-Nazi elite” assembled, but also a significant number of neo-fascists from neighboring countries. The local NPD chapter has secured permission for annual marches until the year 2018.

the events in Stolberg caused so much attention within the neo-Nazi scene. The antifascist media collective Recherche Nord stated that Stolberg provided “the chance to create a martyr to replace the increasingly unsuccessful ‘Rudolf-Hess-Marches.’” Since 1987, the Hess remembrance day in Wunsiedel has functioned as one of Germany’s most important events for gathering a broad spectrum of the European extreme Right. The function of such rituals is the creation of a common identity, a collective We of the participants. The cult of remembrance creates an idealized form of human existence: the male image of the persevering, unwavering warrior willing to make sacrifices. The myth of the martyr demands such a stylized sacrificed “hero”.

To portray oneself as a victim is especially popular amongst the extreme Right because it is easier to justify the necessity of their “desperate heroic fight”, led “by all means necessary”, against alleged oppressors. It is hence not surprising that after the Hess-Marches were banned in 2005 they were replaced by demonstrations claiming that “freedom of opinion” had been denied to the participants. To blame was an “antifascist hegemony”.

Grief? Not exactly...

The myth of the martyr has played a significant role in why

“When a martyr is constructed, of course, the actual person behind the construction becomes rather irrelevant. Important is merely the function of the person’s death.”

confronted with slogans like: “We won’t forgive, we won’t forget, Turks have names and addresses!” Over the following weeks, Stolberg dominated the discussion boards on the nation-wide neo-Nazi websites. Annihilation fantasies abounded: “Gas for the foreigner pest – no hesitation, no mercy!”

Within neo-Nazi circles, the event became clad in Opfermythen [myths of sacrifices for a noble cause], martyr cults and racist creed. Stolberg served as yet another example for the perpetual persecution of “the German” and German nationalists by an alliance of migrants, leftists and liberals. Nationalists hence had to resist: in unity, with determination, and with violence. Kevin P., the young man who was killed, was rapidly turned into a myth, a “hero who died for Germany”, a “soldier fallen on the battlefield”, a “martyr for the national (socialist) cause”. Kevin P. was one of them – or, if he wasn’t (there

creative concepts; a lack of determination and strength; too short a time to mobilize; a failure to understand the symbolic potential of the event for the extreme Right. When neo-Nazis first called for a march in Stolberg, many on the Left saw this as little more than “just another” neo-Nazi demonstration. One has to know that the traveling circus of the extreme Right in North Rhine-Westphalia – and beyond – presents a general problem for antifascist resistance. There are marches almost every week. Siegfried ‘SS-Sigi’ Borchardt, a member of Dortmund’s Freie Kameradschaft [extreme right-wing groups without centralized leadership] explains the strategy: “Through weekly, sometimes daily, actions and demonstrations we can force our enemies – or those who want to be our enemies – into the defensive. They cannot act anymore. All they can do is re-act to our political work.” Of course this is not entirely true and in its overconfidence Borchardt’s statement can be seen as wishful thinking. However, we should not forget that our success as antifascists depends indeed on our ability to act rather than merely re-act. It is the realization of our ideas and dreams that creates hope, courage and strength, and hence the basis for offensive antifascist strategy.

“I am 10% brains, 90% boxer”

In addition to effective coalition building locally (and in wider networks), especially together with those most affected by racist aggression, and in addition to direct (but not careless) attacks on neo-fascist gatherings, antifascist resistance has to focus on discursive interventions.

Even if coalitions with mainstream political organizations are difficult for all the known reasons, they have strategic advantages: a higher capacity to mobilize, a lower possibility of direct repression, and a chance to escape the popular image of “left-wing extremists” taking on “right-wing extremists”. Of course it is mandatory not to lose sight of our own goals and agendas in such coalitions.

We may not compromise our clear intention to stop the marches just for the sake of building a coalition. Yet, we should be ready to deal with political differences in a spirit of openness and solidarity and create respect for different forms of resistance. This can allow for transparent forms of action. Sometimes, the civil disobedience of a broad liberal public can be more effective than the direct action of a few militant antifascists. This, of course, holds only true as long as there is a common (if temporary) objective.

In Stolberg in particular, the need for collaboration with those most affected by racist aggression is of extreme importance. The marches lead through their neighborhood and allow the neo-fascists to take their racist propaganda straight to their homes. The challenge of the coming years will be to build supportive, non-paternalistic structures of local resistance.

As far as discursive interventions go, it seems most important not to buy into the extreme Right’s interpretation of the events. The creation of a martyr demands the death of a human being. In such a case, the most common public response is “not to say anything bad about the dead”. The consequence is a moralistic silence and an impossibility of analysis. The trick is to change levels. This means that we do not make a human being’s death the object of our analysis, but we analyze the extreme Right and its ideology. This is the debate we must advance. And it will be a debate that we control – instead of being drawn into arguments over whatever petty detail the Nazis want to argue about.

If we understand the ideology and the discourse of the extreme Right, we can intervene creatively, carefully, and subversively. We can name their strategies, their goals, and the possible implications of their actions. We can shatter their collective We. And we can deconstruct their martyrs.

There are pockets of resistance everywhere. //

Frontex: EU’s Migrant Hunters

by Laure Akai

FRONTEX is the “European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union”.

It has been operating since 2005 and is headquartered in Warsaw. It not only trains border police and other units (such as RABITS - Rapid Border Intervention Teams, and sea patrols) but coordinates immigrant catching operations and charter deportations, invigilates migrant communities and collects data on them. It is probably now the main institution leading Fortress Europe’s border policy and bringing the border control further and further outside Europe, especially with wide-reaching operations at sea.

Organizations which work with refugees on the West Coast of Africa have pointed out that with the arrival of Frontex, more and more refugees have grave danger and even death. People who want to migrate, for example to go by boat to the Canary Islands, are forced to take longer and more dangerous routes to avoid the Frontex patrols. There travel used to take two-five days at sea; now it can take from 15-20 days. Some choosing to start from another route may also face dangerous overland journeys.

The journey through the desert in Mali has been deadly for many trying to make their way to Europe. Besides would-be immigrants, deportees also find themselves there, or in deserts in places like Morocco, with no food, water or means of survival. Like all institutions which hunt migrants, Frontex claims that its operations are effective but play down the human cost. There are no reliable figures for the total amount of victims of the EU migration policies but it is thought to be in the thousands. This includes not only those who died at sea or in the desert, but those shot dead attempting to cross borders, scale fences in Ceuta (an autonomous city of Spain located on the Mediterranean on the North Africa side of the Strait of Gibraltar), those killed

in deportation or who died in detention.

This situation promises to get worse as Frontex coordinates training exercises with RABITs, using arms. The Frontex Regulation was recently amended. Mr. Vuorensola, the Frontex Legal Advisor, recently explained that the power to carry and use firearms in border operations could now be exercised as Community Law. In a British enquiry on the issue, Frontex explained that indeed British border guards participating in RABIT operations have been endowed with “certain tasks and executive powers” which they would not have in the United Kingdom. Legislators in member states are no longer clear on what legal liability RABIT members have, with Frontex claiming that the Frontex Regulation supercedes all national law.

At the same time that Frontex is coordinating the tightening of the borders, factories and farms throughout Europe are using more and more cheap immigrant labour to boost their profit margins. Immigrants are often forced to work extremely long hours, live in inhuman conditions and carry out dangerous work. Sometimes they are not even paid for their labour or cheated. Yet far less has been done to ensure proper working conditions for these people than has been done to police the borders. And the harder the repression is against immigrants, the more vulnerable they are to everybody who wishes to make money off them, either in the workplace or by transporting them or providing them with services. //

More information about Frontex can be found on the following web pages: frontex.info.pl noborder.org



Migrants trying to get into the eurotunnel terminal in sangatte, france Photo: NoBorder Network

Navigating the World Social Forum 2007

Individualised activists in the “networking bonanza”

While few activists will want to argue against the Social Forum idea per se, and while we can assume that most people who assemble for Social Forums do so with good intentions, autonomous groups, including this year’s Action Network, have expressed concerns with the ever-increasing institutional, bureaucratic, and alienating dimensions of the Social Forums for quite some time. While larger NGOs and their agendas seem to dominate, individual grassroots activists and locals often end up on the perimeters, and spontaneous action has all but disappeared. These sentiments are confirmed by a report from last year’s World Social Forum in Nairobi by London-based activist and researcher Paolo Gerbaudo. The following text is taken from an ongoing research project on the relationship between communication and participation in the anti-globalisation movement

by Paolo Gerbaudo



THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo-liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a planetary society directed towards fruitful relationships among Mankind and between it and the Earth. (World Social Forum’s Charter of Principles, Article 1, Sao Paulo, April 2001)

increasing individualisation whereby “individuals become actors, builders, stage managers of their own biographies and identities and also of their social links and networks” (Ulrich Beck). Third, we are a sort of “political tourists” visiting a “working utopia” and entering a veritable “networking bonanza”.

A “place” where to network

Apart from being the host of a series of seminars, conferences, and cultural events, a key feature of the World Social Forum con-

tacts and later maintaining their connection through mediated interaction by exchanging e-mails and telephone numbers. On the other hand, participants who got to know each other in a mediated form, through e-mails or web-sites, can have a coffee together to “socialise” and develop trust, a process which appears to be intrinsically bound with face-to-face interaction.

The official programme of the World Social Forum in Nairobi did little to facilitate these aspects. It displayed a long spreadsheet

issues. For example, the second edition of the programme was only available on the second day with imaginable consequences for the attendance to the meetings: many events organised by small groups had no other audience than their organisers. This editorial failure testified for the level of disorganisation and scarce level of networking across the organisations mainly responsible for administering the Social Forums. Nairobi was not the first case where the preparation of official Social Forum programmes has been a problem. The consequen-

These events had contributed in constructing and consolidating their connection to a network of activists which ultimately accounted for the information they had gathered about the WSF and which help them to concretely attend it. Second, the WSF is the departing end for the participation to a new series of events. Many people I spoke to declared that a good deal of their motivation to come to the Forum had to do with their need to know others and “network”. Getting to know other people was seen as the first step for a series of mediated interactions after the Forum which might have allowed for developing joint projects and also specifically for organising new physical events: presentations, volunteer projects, work collaborations etc. The mailing lists that were circulating around different encounters of the Forum are the symptom of this potentiality of the event as a site were to expand and consolidate or set up a new alternative networks of communication to sustain participation to further events. The WSF thus appears as a vantage point from which to plan one’s partakings to new physical encounters profiting from the density and proximity of communication networks which is available in this physical event.

A global orientation

These two different processes concerning the role of the Social Forum as a point of arrival and of departure converge into the individual activist’s spatial understanding of the Social Forum as “something in-between”, a step in his/her personal political path. This is the organising principle

of a “global orientation” which allows activists to see the Forum as a node in a network of past and future events they have partaken in or they are planning to partake in. The participation in such a network of events is deeply bound to a series of communication outlets providing practical information about social movements events. All of the people I talked to were internet users and almost all of them had used the official WSF website in order to gather the basic information for organising their trip and accommodation.

Many participants recalled to have heard about the Social Forums for the first time on newspaper articles or TV news. Yet almost all of them had been “alerted” in advance by their network of peers, alternative information sources, or the organisation they pertained to (amongst others trade unions, environmental organisations, human rights organisations etc.). While some went to the Forum with members of their social network (or to join them there), others planned on “trying to catch up” at the Forum with some of the peers in their loose network of contacts. These different dispositions towards the space of the Forum gives shape to two types of activist orientations which depend on the strength of individual ties with specific organisations and their social networks: “affiliated orientation” and “independent orientation”.

We can sum up these two different dispositions and understandings as follows: 1) in the case of “affiliated participants” the tight network of contacts and the issue-based communicative frame underlying their interac-

tion with the Forum, shaped quite rigidly their interaction with the Forum itself; 2) in the case of independents an higher flexibility in the interaction with the events of the Forum was connected with a more eclectic and unstable set of contacts and communicative interactions. While in the case of affiliated participants affinity was manifested as belonging to a specific group and thus having a pre-disposition to interact with similar groups and issues, in the case of independent participants the development of affinity was connected to a curiosity about a broader set of issues

“...despite the claim to radical openness made by the organisers of the World Social Forum, the event is articulated by a series of both spatial and communicative closures.”

and actors and for the Forum as a whole. Both forms of orientation articulate in different ways individual participants’ belonging to certain structures of affinity and the communicative, social and spatial networks associated with them. While affinities aggregate, this aggregation goes together with a communicative and spatial closure towards other groups with different identities and action frames. The absence of plenaries and the scarcity of big assemblies – but also of meetings crossing different thematic areas – which characterised the WSF were accompanied by the absence of an overarching theme, of a “master frame” to organise different affinity-based groups frames. In this context different structures of affinity converging in the Forum tend to cohabit with each other rather than fully cooperate and cross-fertilise. As an Italian woman affiliated to Rifondazione

Comunista reflected: “The risk here is that people don’t talk with the others. People just go to their own stuff. Environmentalists with environmentalists, feminists with feminists, trade unionists with trade unionists, socialists with socialists.”

This fragmentation within the WSF combined with a series of closures along the trajectories leading people to the WSF and along the channels which fuel their orientation towards it. Unsurprisingly, nobody among the people I talked to had arrived to the Forum just out of curiosity.

Most of them had already participated in other international protests or in other Social Forums. All of them were, if not explicitly affiliated to a political or social organisation, at least part of a network of activist peers. All of them thus were connected to circuits of alternative information which they had gathered about the World Social Forum. Apart from the partaking Kenyans, the participants seemed to represent, to different extents, quite a tight and exclusive “global elite” of some sort.

Inside/outside

While inside the Forum different social networks were split in different spaces of discussion, the Forum also underlined a strong closure towards “the outside” perfectly exemplified by its interaction with the local communities

and especially with those living in the slums nearby. This edition of the WSF had put particular emphasis on the problem of slums with the slogan “Another world is possible, even for slums dwellers”. The inaugural march and the closing marathon brought thousands of delegates and participants of the event through a series of slums and in touch with the harsh condition of their inhabitants. Nonetheless, for slums dwellers it was impossible to directly partake to the Forum because of high entrance fees. In the last days of the event polemics ensued around this issue after a

series of protests conducted by the local activist group “World Parliament of the Poor”. In the last day the organising committee was forced to scrap entrance fees and the Forum was eventually flooded by a crowd of common local people.

Apart from this blatant exclusion of local communities from the space of the WSF in the months before the event very little had been done by the organisation of the WSF organizers for involving slum dwellers in its participation. John Paul, a Kenyan community activist from Nairobi who was working as volunteer translator at the Forum testified to this situation: “In my community nobody knew about the Forum. I only got to know about this from a friend of mine [an Italian priest] who wrote me an e-mail about it and said they needed translators...and told me that I should get involved.

But the others where I live...no...nobody had told them about the Forum.” Thus the closure of the space of communication (local inhabitants being denied entry due to high entrance fees) went together with a closure in the communication of the space (little or no effort in informing local communities about the event).

Information and closures

The orientation to the participation in social movements activity and in events such as the WSF is connected to a limited and specific set of social positions. The coordination of different orientations goes together with the exclusion of other individual orientations and connected social positions. This is due to the fact that also because of the partially place-bound character of communication in social movements, information is unevenly distributed among participants. And even if people might be interested in participating they will never get to know it from their information network or be motivated to go by a network of activist peers.

In conclusion, despite the claim to radical openness made by the organisers of the World Social Forum, the event is articulated by a series of both spatial and communicative closures. In front of the celebratory appraisal of the horizontality of social movements’ networks underlying the World Social Forum, I suggest we should also consider what lies outside of those networks, since it is at that level that the degree of openness of the World Social Forum and of similar occasions of encounter can be read. “

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